



A RECORD OF A MORTAL'S JOURNEY TO IMMORTALITY

BOOK 09

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A Record of a Mortal's Journey to Immortality

(凡人修仙传)

by

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Synopsis

A poor and ordinary boy from a village joins a minor sect in Jiang Hu and becomes an Unofficial Disciple by chance.

How will Han Li, a commoner by birth, establish a foothold for himself in his sect?

With his mediocre aptitude, how will he successfully traverse the path of cultivation and become an immortal?

This is a story of an ordinary mortal who, against all odds, clashes with devilish demons and the ancient celestials in order to find his own path to immortality.

Acknowledgement

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Chapter 801: Chen Qiaotian

After spending the night in the forest, Han Li withdrew the Sovereign Devil Corpse and made his way to the Myriad Link Mountains.

Before he sought out Violet Spirit and the others the day before, he hadn't discovered traces of the Heavenpeak Sect disciples. As a result, he continued to hold onto the medallion that the Heavenpeak Elder had given him but hadn't had a chance to use it. It was also out of the question to seek out Marquis Nanlong. It seemed the Heavenpeak Sect had either found another area of residence or that they hadn't even arrived yet.

Han Li wasn't worried about this and instead prepared a temporary place to stay nearby the mountains and refine a few Core Formations stage puppets in the downtime. With the Yin Yang Rings in his possession, he reckoned Marquis Nanlong would take the initiative to seek him out.

As of current, Han Li faintly realized that the Greatnorth Essence Light wasn't something that existed outside of the entrance to the valley. Most of it appeared at the entrance of the valley. Were this not the case, the Ghost Spirit Sect wouldn't have the ability to take several hundreds of cultivators simultaneously into the valley, regardless of how skilled they may be.

As these thoughts appeared in Han Li's mind, he flew in a streak of azure light and calmly went forward. With his speed, he was able to fly tens of kilometers away after only a short moment. Less than half a day later, he arrived near the Myriad Link Mountains.

He had heard that there were several market cities that had recently opened nearby the Myriad Link Mountains and decided to pay a visit to them along the way and collect a few materials for refining puppets. Additionally, Han Li had acquired quite a few rare materials after the war with the Moulan in exchange for their

ancient heritage lantern that he had seized during the battle.

Those materials were nearly priceless and would allow Han Li to craft an amazing quantity of high-grade puppets. As such, he would only be purchasing a few basic puppet materials while inside the city.

As for the materials needed to refine the ancient Nascent Soul stage puppets, the Thousand Bamboo School in the Far West had managed to gather three of the materials, but they were still missing a material known as the Blood Phoenix Wood.

The material was a rarely seen peak grade tool refining material. Although it wasn't as nearly difficult to acquire as the Auric Essence, it was also impossible to find in markets. One would only be able to come across it as a matter of luck. Fortunately, Han Li had already ordered the Drifting Cloud Sect to be on the lookout for the appearance of such a material. If they acquired any information, they were to directly notify him. It would only be a matter of time before he acquired it, but not before he entered Devilfall Valley.

Suddenly, Han Li's expression stirred and he came to a sudden stop. Not far away from him, there was a surge of spiritual Qi fluctuations and flickers of light, where a few cultivators were having a fierce battle. Han Li frowned but didn't pay it much heed. As of current, the area was swarming with all sorts of characters and it wouldn't be rare for enemies to occasionally encounter one another.

With Han Li's cultivation, he approached them from a kilometer away. Meanwhile, the cultivators were still fighting, oblivious to his presence. There were four men and one woman, battling against each other in two parties.

Han Li swept his gaze past them only to discover that they were all Core Formation cultivators at the mid and early stages. However, hostilities between the sides were great. Not only were

magic treasures soaring through the skies, but various talismans also ruptured around them.

However, the party of three with the woman were being completely suppressed by the other two cultivators. However, it wasn't due to a more profound cultivation; it was because of the several hundred huge moths that they surrounded the opposing three cultivators with.

These frightening moths were the size of a palm and their wings emitted a poisonous rainbow powder. As a result, the three cultivators had to use a majority of their energy toward keeping themselves free from it. And under the additional assault of the two cultivators' magic treasures, the three found it difficult to endure.

While the three cultivators found themselves at a disadvantage, the battle was far from over. Apart from the poisonous moths and the silver brush and golden scroll magic treasures that the scholarly man wielded, Han Li found the battle to be little of note given their cultivation.

Although he didn't know what sects these cultivators belonged to, Han Li had little interest in being involved with other people's affairs. Just as he thought to fly away, he suddenly spotted an emblem of Yellow Maple Valley from the robes of the scholarly man.

"Yellow Maple Valley?" Han Li glanced at the scholar's face with surprise. As Han Li paused, the battle quickly shifted in favor of the two cultivators controlling the moths.

When Han Li decided to approach, the two cultivators hastily spread out their spiritual sense in alarm and their expressions vastly changed.

The pair of cultivators hastily withdrew their magic treasures, but they had their poisonous moths continue to tangle with the three other cultivators. They flew distantly to the side and saluted

Han Li. “May we know the Senior that has graced us with his presence? We are disciples from the Controlling Spirit Sect.”

“The Controlling Spirit Sect? You two are Devil cultivators?” When Han Li heard this, he ceased flying and vanished the light he was flying in, revealing his true form.

“You are the Drifting Cloud Sect’s Senior Han!” The taller of the two cultivators immediately recognized him and cried out in alarm.

Han Li shot a glance at him and indifferently asked, “You recognize me?”

The Controlling Spirit Sect cultivators grew restless, but they maintained a respectful appearance and one of them replied, “When Senior fought in the border battle, I witnessed Senior Han’s vast abilities.”

“That is good. Although I don’t want to interfere with the affairs of Juniors, I have some kind of a relationship with Yellow Maple Valley. Put away those spirit insects and abandon the battle for today.” Han Li spoke resolutely with a glint shining in his eye.

When they heard Han Li, they couldn’t help but glance at each other in dismay.

“What? Do you two Fellow Daoists feel that this is difficult to do?” Han Li’s expression grew sullen, and his tone turned harsh.

The taller of the cultivators felt his heart drop upon seeing Han Li’s change in expression and he inwardly cursed. Since Han Li had decided to involve himself, they had no leeway. He hurriedly replied, “Since it is Senior’s orders, we will naturally obey.”

He meaningfully glanced at the other cultivator and the two grasped their hands in an incantation gesture. After hastily casting a spell seal to the swarm of moths, they summoned their spirit beast pouches into the air. In an instant, the moths surrounding the three opposing cultivators scattered and they darted into the

storage pouches.

The three cultivators had already seen Han Li, but they were unable to clearly hear the conversation the other two had with him due to being assaulted by the moths. But now that they were unfathomably released from the moths, they knew it had something to do with Han Li. In their delight, they exchanged a glance with one another and hastily flew towards him.

At that moment, the two Controlling Spirit Sect cultivators felt unwilling to further stay. One of them carefully said, “Would Senior have any other commands for us? We will follow them as best we can.”

Han Li guessed their intentions and waved his hand. “There is nothing else. You two may leave.”

“Then we will both take our leave.” When the two heard him, they hastily bowed and immediately set off in streaks of green light.

At that moment, the other three cultivators flew over.

Seeing that the Controlling Spirit Sect cultivators had left, the three glanced at each other in astonishment. Their leader, the middle-aged green-robed scholarly man, stepped forward and saluted Han Li. He wore a respectful expression and said, “Many thanks for Senior’s rescue, I cannot thank you enough. May I know Senior’s name?” The scholarly man was surprised to see how young Han Li appeared, but he felt as if his appearance was somewhat familiar.

Instead of answering, Han Li expressionlessly asked, “You are cultivators from Yellow Maple Valley?”

“Junior is Yellow Maple Valley’s Chen Qiaotian. These are my sworn siblings, disciples of the Saber Transformation Dock. Is Senior acquainted with Martial Ancestor Linghu?” When he saw that Han Li had assisted them despite not belonging to the Six

Sects of Yue, he realized that this Nascent Soul Senior should have a relationship with their Martial Ancestor Linghu.

“Chen Qiaotian? You’re a member of the Chen Clan?” A strange expression appeared on Han Li’s face.

The scholarly man revealed a stunned expression, “Senior knows of my clan?”

Han Li grew silent and began to closely examine the scholarly man, much to the unease of the three Core Formation cultivators.

Han Li sighed and slowly said, “The Chen Clan is one of the three great clans of Yellow Maple Valley. How could I not know of it. What is your relationship with Chen Qiaoqian?”

“Senior recognizes my younger sister?” The scholarly man asked in alarm.

“Chen Qiaoqian is your little sister?” Although Han Li had guessed this was the case, a trace of surprise appeared in his eyes. As for the scholarly man, he was at a complete loss as to what relationship this expert had with his little sister.

Han Li’s expression wavered for a moment before he slowly asked, “Is she doing well?”

With an odd expression, Chen Qiaotian replied, “My little sister was unable to form a core and died over a hundred years ago from an illness.”

“She’s dead...” Han Li couldn’t help but mutter this as her lovely appearance suddenly appeared in his mind. He suddenly recalled the last time they had seen on their trip to the mountains, where she bared her feelings to him. He stood in place for a time as if at a complete loss.

Seeing that Han Li had remained silent with an odd expression on his face, Chen Qiaotian couldn’t help but ask, “Senior knows my little sister?”

Forcefully suppressing the sadness in his heart, he calmly replied, “Of course I know her. When I last saw your little sister, she said she was going to marry. But that was before the Invasion of the Devil Dao. I don’t know whether or not the marriage went through.”

Chapter 802: Core Formation Grade Puppets

After a moment of hesitation, Chen Qiaotian said, “My little sister was supposed to marry that year, but the clan she was supposed to marry into switched sides to the Devil Dao. Naturally, we couldn’t allow the marriage with Qiaoqian to go through. Afterwards, my little sister became taciturn and showed little interest in men, remaining alone for the rest of her life.”

Han Li suddenly recalled a rumor that had spread throughout the sect and his expression unconsciously changed.

“She didn’t marry?” An odd expression appeared on Han Li’s face and he wordlessly looked to the sky for a moment.

After a long while, Han Li lowered his head and said, “From your expression, it seems you should know who I am, so I won’t speak further of myself. The Righteous and Devil Dao have currently gathered together here. Since you plan on entering Devilfall Valley, you had best fend for yourselves.” Once Han Li said this, he paid no further attention to the three and tore through the skies in a streak of azure light.

The three Core Formation cultivators respectfully remained silent as Han Li quickly disappeared from sight.

A while later, the woman couldn’t help but ask, “Elder Brother, why did that Senior help us? Does he have a relationship to your Chen Clan?”

Glancing in the direction that Han Li disappeared, he bewilderedly said, “Relationship? Our Chen Clan isn’t worthy of having a relationship with that Senior. If I guess correctly, you should also know of his esteemed name. In the past, he originated from my Yellow Maple Valley and escaped unscathed from the hands of a Moulan Divine Sage. In the battle at the border, he

defeated the Moulan Sacred Bird and executed the Jin Empire's Yin Sifting Sect elder. Surely you should know of his name? But from what he said, he seemed to be close to my deceased sister. How baffling."

The woman was greatly shocked and shouted in alarm, "What? It was that legendary figure? He looks as young as expected. From what my Seniors said, this person was once a member of our Six Sects of Yue. It is inconceivable that his abilities are as magnificent as they are now."

Chen Qiaotian sighed and said, "That's right. When he entered Yellow Maple Valley, I had just reached Foundation Establishment. Later, he entered the Trial of Blood and Fire at the same time as me and my little sister. From then on, things spiralled beyond the scope of imagination and he is now an existence on par with the three Great Heavenly South Cultivators."

The third cultivator, the blue-clothed man, curiously asked, "I heard that Martial Senior Linghu had implored this person to return to the sect, but he was unwilling. Is this true?"

After a moment of hesitation, Chen Qiaotian vaguely said, "I'm not too sure about this. It is possible though." Despite their sworn brotherhood, he was unwilling to mention the matter further. Fortunately, the other two cultivators dropped the matter.

The blue-clothed man changed the topic and said, "We were quite lucky this time around. Elder Brother had just recently refined his golden book and silver brush magic tools and was able to block most of the moths' poisonous powder. Senior Han managed to interrupt the situation and we were able to escape calamity without harm. If Elder Brother had fully refined the golden book, surely we would have nothing to fear from the Yun Brothers."

The female cultivator eagerly said, "That's true. I have previously heard that the Chen Clan had the golden book and

silver brush inheritance magic tools. But I didn't think that there was also a refinement method for a magic treasure. Didn't Elder Brother use a flying sword before?"

Chen Qiaotian happily explained, "The golden books and silver brushes that our Chen Clan disciples use are mere counterfeits of the magic treasure. Although I had wished to refine these magic treasures from the start, I never had the materials as I was only able to gather together the materials to refine a flying sword. Fortunately, I was able to gather enough materials over the past few years to refine these magic treasures. I had hoped to use them in Devilfall Valley." But soon, he paused and continued, "Enough. Regardless of what it is said, it is better for us to be careful as Senior Han has said. Cultivators that dare to enter Devilfall Valley are by no means ordinary. It'll be better if we accompany our fellow martial brothers from the Six Sects of Yue."

The two nodded. "Elder Brother's words are reasonable."

"Good. We'll do as Elder Brother has suggested."

The three cultivators then took off, leaving any further discussion for later.

A distance away, Han Li felt his heart in turmoil. He forcefully suppressed the grief he felt for Chen Qiaoqian and buried it in the deepest depths of his heart before forcing himself to continue on his way.

Four hours later, he caught sight of the Myriad Link Mountains as well as the thinning miasma that surrounded it. The verdant forests and towering peaks could all be vaguely seen.

The mountains on the edge couldn't be said to be huge, only wide. As far as the eye could see, the mountain ridge spread to either side as a continuous black line.

Han Li slowed down when he arrived nearby and took a look at his surroundings. It was quiet and had no other traces of

cultivators. With an indifferent expression, he flew a bit further and slowly closed his eyes. Suddenly, he spread out his immense spiritual sense and quickly searched a fifty kilometers perimeter around him.

A short moment later, he frowned and opened his eyes. Then with an indifferent expression, he shot through the skies towards a certain destination.

After the time it took to finish a cup of tea, he arrived at a small mountain. There was an old cultivator accompanied by a youth who were sitting cross-legged across from each other and were chatting. At that moment, an azure light flashed above their hands to reveal Han Li standing in the air.

The two were frightened by his sudden appearance, and they hastily stood up. The old man managed to preserve his calm, but the youth wore a face of alarm.

Han Li swept his sights past the two and saw that their cultivations weren't very high. The old man was at the mid-Foundation Establishment stage while the youth was only at the sixth layer of Qi Condensation. It was unknown what they were doing so near the Myriad Link Mountains when their cultivations were so low.

At that moment, the old man used his spiritual sense to glance at Han Li only to discover that his cultivation was at an unfathomable realm. With alarm in his heart, he was just about to perform a deep bow as Han Li's cold words echoed through the air, "There is no need to be alarmed. Can you point me in the direction of the nearest market city? That is all you need to do." Han Li's voice was filled with unquestionable authority.

When the old man heard this, he quickly replied in a respectful manner, "Head west about two hundred kilometers. There is a newly opened market city that Senior may take a look at."

"Head west two hundred kilometers? I got it." Then with a flash

of azure light, Han Li disappeared without a trace.

The old man watched with amazement as the azure streak disappeared and turned into a speck of light across the sky and disappeared. The old man and the youth remained dumbstruck by the sight.

...

About two hundred kilometers west, there was an extremely crude temporary market city that had been created with stone formation techniques. There were very few cultivators wandering within.

Han Li didn't pay this any mind and purchased a large number of materials from the stores before flying off towards the mountain range.

He walked over five kilometers deep into the mountain range as the miasma suddenly grew thicker. Soon, he arrived on top of a small, unremarkable mountain.

It was easy work for Han Li to open a new cave residence. With over ten flying swords cutting about, a small and simple residence was carved out of the mountain after only a short moment. After looking at the results, Han Li nodded with satisfaction and promptly placed two simple spell formations around it before entering the cave residence.

He first released Silvermoon and had her cultivate within the cave. He then released the Sovereign Devil Corpse and buried it in a dark room. Afterward, Han Li brought a large number of materials with him in a hidden room.

He sat at the center of the hidden room and took out the jade slip that the Monarch of Soul Divergence had given him before looking through the two Core Formation puppet refinement methods that it contained. These two types of puppets were the same size as the Foundation Establishment grade ape puppets that he had

previously created, and they each had their own merits and drawbacks.

One of the puppets had the shape of a huge tortoise with a dense and rough exterior thatt could withstand over three blows from a Nascent Soul stage cultivator. Additionally, it attacked by spitting out balls of lightning flame, an attack on the level of a mid-Core Formation cultivator. However, its sole flaw was that it was incredibly slow and clumsy. If a cultivator were to attack it from close range, it would become an immobile target that wouldn't be able to defend itself.

The other puppet design was that of a tiger, and the tortoise's exact opposite. This puppet didn't have any long range attacks, and its only defense was its swift and light movements. It had crystal claws that were six inches long and capable of easily shredding through the protective barriers of a common Core formation cultivator. It was completely dedicated to close quarters combat.

After looking through the puppets' characteristics, Han Li decided to refine a few puppets from both designs. As such, he would be able to better deal with any situations that Devilfall Valley may place him in.

With that decided, Han Li immersed his spiritual sense into the jade slip and committed the refinement methods to memory. Afterwards, Han Li spent three entire days inside the hidden room while he sat cross-legged and didn't move.

But on the fourth day, Han Li's expression stirred and he pursed his lips before withdrawing his spiritual sense from the jade slip. He then pondered for a moment more, and with a flip of his hand, the jade slip disappeared in a flash of white light.

He flung out the storage pouch at his waist and countless tool refinement materials appeared on the floor with a flicker of white light: rare woods, metal essences, various colored gems, and jade

boxes of all sizes.

A short moment later, these items were all gathered together in a large pile in front of Han Li before he recalled the storage pouch back to his waist. Afterwards, he swept his gaze past the materials in the pile.

His eyes dropped onto the jet-black ironwood, and with a deep breath, he pointed at it, summoning it towards him.

Chapter 803: Search

The door to Han Li's hidden room wasn't opened for several months. During this time, Silvermoon took note of what happened on the outside, preventing Han Li from missing his opportunity for entering Devilfall Valley.

With each passing day, the miasma grew thinner and the number of cultivators near the Myriad Link Mountains grew. Additionally, a majority of them were gathering in a certain part of Birch Leaf City as it was the closest city to Devilfall Valley.

All of the various cultivators who acquired a Devilfall Medallion were all present and many of them had made a temporary cave residence nearby as they waited.

The spell formation Han Li arranged outside of the cave residence wasn't a top grade restriction. As such, there were many cultivators that had discovered Han Li's cave residence and there were a few that even wished to pay him a visit. But regardless of the sound transmission talismans that had arrived at the restrictions outside his residence, none of them were given a reply.

Although there were a few cultivators that weren't very pleased at the fact that the cave residence's master didn't wish to see any visitors, they were unable to do anything about it as they didn't know who the owner of the residence was. There was a risk of creating a formidable enemy.

However, Han Li's behavior of refusing guests was the exception, not the norm. There were countless cultivators who arrived here, both proud and arrogant, but in the most dangerous area of the Heavenly South, they all felt the need to be careful. As a result, they either formed small groups of around five or joined together with their friends to enter Devilfall Valley.

Although there wasn't much benefit in searching for treasures together with others, if anything dangerous occurred, they had

better odds of survival than if they traveled alone. Under that mindset, even solitary and reclusive cultivators began to strive to make friends.

During that time, the miasma was near the point of scattering and Silvermoon was wondering whether or not it was time to call for Han Li to leave the hidden room. But before she could come to a decision, the door opened and Han Li calmly walked out.

In the several months he was secluded, Han Li had refined over thirty puppets in succession with the tortoise and tiger puppets equally divided in number. It was fortunate that Han Li had managed to acquire a large number of high-grade demon beast souls in his time in the Scattered Star Seas. Even if he had an abundance of all his other materials, he wouldn't be able to craft anything without those powerful and rare souls.

When the Monarch of Soul Divergence saw Han Li readily taking out high-grade demon beast souls to refine personally researched puppet designs, he couldn't help but call Han Li a young monster. But he said nothing else after that outburst.

When Han Li emerged, he still had enough materials to refine more puppets but reckoned that he didn't have enough time for more, and there wouldn't be a big difference with a few more puppets.

Since Silvermoon had been giving Han Li reports during the time he was refining puppets, he only nodded towards her and said nothing else.

He soon arrived at a dark room and watched the Sovereign Devil Corpse and saw that everything was in order, much to his satisfaction. Then he withdrew the corpse and had Silvermoon enter his sleeve before emerging from his cave residence.

Han Li immediately took off and arrived at the peak of the mountain of his cave residence. After sitting down cross-legged, he spread out his spiritual sense and slowly swept past the cave

residences of the cultivators nearby. With his powerful spiritual sense, even early Nascent Soul cultivators wouldn't be able to detect Han Li's prying unless they were attentive. As a result, Han Li was able to sense everything within a radius of fifty kilometers with the exception of a few areas with particularly strong auras and restrictions.

But a short moment later, Han Li opened his eyes and shook his head with a frown. He didn't find who he was looking for. With some thought, Han Li then glowed with light and flew towards the nearby market city. Given current circumstances, it should've gathered quite a profit by now.

The market city nearest to Han Li's cave residence was opened by a large cultivator clan from the State of Dongyu. The clan had done this for ages and indifferently opened their market city despite the news of the treasure hunt in Devilfall Valley.

As a result, business thrived due to the appearance of a large number of high-grade cultivators. There were even a few common cultivators that took advantage of the thin miasma and harvested the resources that were exposed, managing to reap a profit without any intention of entering Devilfall Valley.

Inside a simple medicine shop in the market city, a white-clothed cultivator pair were pointing at a medicinal herb and talking about it with a shopkeeper. A short moment later, the three came to an agreement and the pair took out a pile of spirit stones, much to the delight of the shopkeeper.

The two cultivators were the only ones walking on the street at that moment. The scholarly youth smiled to his female companion and said, "Junior Martial Sister Yuan, our luck has turned out to be quite good. After spending only a short while in this market city, we managed to buy a Gold Spirit Branch. You've been looking for this herb for a good while. You can start refining the Breath Refinement Pill."

“This was because of the spirit stones that Senior Martial Brother Bai lent me. Otherwise, I would’ve missed the chance.” The white-clothed woman had a common appearance, but her eyes were bright and spirited, adding a bit of seductiveness to her charm.

“Junior Martial Sister’s affairs are mine as well so this small number of spirit stones is nothing.” Although the white-clothed youth did feel a bit of heartache over the large purchase, he wore an expression of complete adoration towards the woman at his side.

The white-clothed woman pursed her lips in a smile but just as she thought to say something, a person suddenly appeared in their way. He immediately raised his hand and shot a yellow streak of light towards them. In his alarm, the white-clothed youth’s hand flashed with white light and he unconsciously caught the yellow streak of light in his hand before discovering that it was a shining yellow command medallion.

The youth recognized the medallion and raised his head to look at Han Li in alarm. “The Heavenpeak Writ? You’re Senior Han?”

This youth was the Heavenpeak Disciple Bai Shujun, who had attempted to grab Han Li’s attention in the past through Mu Peiling. After Han Li arrived at the market city, he had immediately found him with his spiritual sense and rejoiced. Through him, Han Li should be able to find his master, the Heavenpeak Sect’s Lu Weiying. However, Han Li didn’t have a very good impression of this person and treated him without regard.

Without a trace of politeness, he spoke in an oppressive tone, “I need to see your master. Lead me to him, Fellow Daoist Bai.”

“Senior Han, you wish to see my master? I...” After closely inspecting the talisman in his hand, he respectfully replied, “Yes, I will bring you to him.”

Han Li was no longer a newly ascended early Nascent Soul

cultivator. He was now an existence on par with the three Great Heavenly South cultivators. This had caused Bai Shujun to greatly regret his impudent actions from the past. Now that he had verified the command medallion, he promptly agreed in hopes of improving Senior Han's impression of him.

As for the woman by his side, she examined Han Li with slight astonishment. With a flicker of her eyes, she remained silent.

Under the guidance of Bai Shujun, the three left the market city and flew off toward the east. After flying for over a quarter hour, Bai Shujun brought Han Li back to the Myriad Link Mountains. After heading in for a couple tens of kilometers, they arrived at a small mountain.

Han Li's gaze swept past the mountain, observing that although the mountain was small, it was well hidden by the tall surrounding mountains. After activating the Brightsight Spirit Eyes, Han Li revealed a pensive expression after penetrating the mountain rock.

At that moment, Bai Shujun took out a sound transmission talisman from his robes and tossed it into the air. It flew into the mountain stone in a streak of fiery light and created a series of ripples throughout the wall before disappearing from sight.

Standing at Han Li's side, the youth eagerly offered Han Li an explanation, "This is my master's temporary residence. It is often concealed with the Minor Xumi Restriction. He gave his disciples orders that unless it was important, we were not to bother him. Even Junior Martial Sister Lu cannot rashly pay him a visit during this time. However, since Senior Han has sought him out, it must be important. My master definitely won't scold me."

When the woman heard the youth mention her, she snorted and wore an unhappy expression, but she remained silent in Han Li's presence. She had already guessed who Han Li was. As Lu Weiyin's descendant, she didn't dare to be disrespectful in front of Han Li.

Han Li glanced at the woman at his side and casually asked, "Oh?

Your surname is also Lu? Could you be Fellow Daoist Lu's descendant?"

The woman sweetly smiled and said, "Elder Lu is my great uncle. However, I have heard of Senior's famous reputation for quite some time."

Han Li weakly smiled back but said nothing further. Azure light flashed from the wall in front of them, suddenly opening a six-meter-wide gate in the wall. A leisurely voice spoke from within, "Hehe! Fellow Daoist Han, you've finally come. If you hadn't come, I would've had to personally go and find you. Please come in, I'm waiting for you in the main hall."

Han Li smiled and wordlessly stepped inside. Bai Shujun and the woman surnamed Lu hesitated for a moment, but when they thought to enter, their master called out to them, "You two don't need to enter. I have a few things to discuss with Fellow Daoist Han. You may head off and deal with your own matters."

Although the two were somewhat shocked to hear his orders, they didn't dare to disobey and respectfully acknowledge him before flying off.

Once Han Li entered the stone gates, the gates disappeared in a flash of azure light, restoring its original appearance as a stone wall.

Chapter 804: Appearance of the Valley

Just like how Han Li had created his own interim cave residence, the Heavenpeak Sect's Elder Lu's cave residence was the same.

After Han Li walked through a sixty-meter-long passageway, he arrived at the cave residence's main hall, a stone room that was over twenty meters wide. A grey-robed old man with a friendly face and a middle-aged man with a tall hat were both waiting for him.

The grey-robed old man smiled and said, "Fellow Daoist Han, you've finally arrived."

"Brother Han has kept us waiting for quite a while. We've sent people to look for you for a month already. It's a pity that you were so well hidden. Since we couldn't find even a trace of you, we thought Brother Han had changed his mind!" Marquis Nanlong bitterly smiled but a trace of happiness could be seen from his face.

"You also weren't easy to find, given how secretive your residence was." Han Li sighed and helplessly explained, "Not long before, I was sealed in seclusion for a time, so it was natural that you couldn't find me."

Just as Han Li took a seat, Marquis Nanlong wore a strange expression and said, "Brother Han is as famous as the sun is bright. Not only did you display extraordinary skill in the battle at the border, but I heard you slew a mid Nascent Soul Elder from a Jin Empire Devil Sect. You must've spent quite a bit of effort to conceal your abilities."

Unwilling to reveal the entire truth, Han Li shook his head and vaguely said, "It isn't as if Brother Nanlong hadn't seen my abilities before. If I truly possessed such incredible abilities, I wouldn't have had to flusteredly flee from the Moulan Plains. My current fame is only a matter of luck. Speaking of matters of luck, it's because of luck that I managed to appear before you today."

When Elder Lu and Marquis Nanlong heard Han Li, they couldn't help but look at each other with doubt. With their spiritual sense, they were able to clearly sense that Han Li's cultivation was only at early Nascent Soul stage. Likewise, they knew that Han Li was unordinary, but the two still found it hard to believe that he was able to slay a devil cultivator at the peak of mid Nascent Soul stage. However, all the rumors about Han Li were widely spread and spoke of his amazing feats, much to the bewilderment of the two mid Nascent Soul cultivators.

Marquis Nanlong dryly laughed and said with an ironic tone, "Hehe! Fellow Daoist Han is far too modest. To tell the truth, the greater your abilities, the better it will be when we enter Devilfall Valley. We look forward to witnessing the power of a cultivator on par with the three Great Heavenly South Cultivators."

When Han Li heard this, he silently smiled and said nothing further, wishing to drop the matter.

Elder Lu then spoke with a solemn voice, "Brother Han, since you've sought us out, it seems you've put some thought into our proposition. Are you willing to enter the valley with us and kill the Ancient Flame Toad together?" Once the old man finished speaking, Marquis Nanlong also stared at Han Li with a solemn expression.

"I don't wish to let go of such a golden opportunity, but there is something I have to ask before I come to a decision," Han Li answered with complete calm. "How will we divide the treasures we find amongst ancient cultivator remains? If the answer is acceptable, I will take the risk of accepting this journey." Although he was certain to enter Devilfall Valley one way or another, he wasn't about to reveal his intentions and allow them to negotiate the conditions.

It was unknown how much the two had discussed the matter previously, as the old man promptly responded, "If we are able to smoothly acquire the treasures, how about we evenly divide

them?”

Han Li didn’t immediately reply or reveal dissatisfaction. Instead, he muttered to himself for a moment and replied, “This is fair. After all, without you two to guide the way, I also wouldn’t be able to deeply enter into the valley or be able to find the Ancient Flame Toad. However, I still have one more condition that I hope you two will agree to.”

“Fellow Daoist Han, please state your condition!” Elder Lu spoke without any hesitation. While Marquis Nanlong’s face stirred, he stared at Han Li in silence.

“I need the inner core of the Ancient Flame Toad. It is useful to me.” Han Li spoke of the matter with a casual tone as if it were only something of little value.

Elder Lu promptly agreed upon hearing him, “This will be no problem! We are relying on you to slay the beast. It is only proper for you to have its inner core.”

Marquis Nanlong’s expression relaxed after hearing Han Li’s request. “That’s right. Even if Fellow Daoist hadn’t mentioned it, we would’ve given the core to you anyway.”

Han Li smiled after hearing them and said, “Since you have both agreed, I won’t push matters further and be too greedy. I agree to head into the valley alongside you two Fellow Daoists.”

“With Fellow Daoist Han by our side, the treasure will be acquired very smoothly.”

“We will be relying on you, Brother Han.” Seeing that Han Li had agreed, Marquis Nanlong and Elder Lu couldn’t contain their excitement and spoke in succession.

Not at all carried away by their praise, Han Li smiled and said, “You both value me too greatly. I am well aware that you two will be the leaders in the valley and I will only be acting as support, considering my cultivation. Also, it will only be with our combined

efforts that we'll be able to escape unscathed.”

“This is natural. Since we sought out Fellow Daoist Han to cooperate with us, we trust you greatly. If those treacherous villains from the Ghost Spirit Sect had acquired the Yin Yang Ring, I would've had to directly kill them.” When Marquis Nanlong mentioned the Ghost Spirit Sect, he gritted his teeth. It appeared that the damage he had suffered from his previous battle was truly frightening.

When Han Li heard this, he couldn't help but take another glance at Marquis Nanlong. While he still appeared well, it was unknown how much of his vitality he had managed to recover.

“Speaking of the Ghost Spirit Sect, do you two Fellow Daoists know about the method they are using to enter the valley? What is your take on it?” Han Li asked.

Marquis Nanlong coldly chuckled and a strange expression appeared on his face. “What is there to say about it? We merely interfered with their plans to monopolize the treasures. With other cultivators entering the valley, not only will it conceal our tracks but it will also prevent us from being surrounded by the Ghost Spirit Sect.”

With slight surprise, Han Li said, “From what you've said, could it be that the both of you had deliberately leaked the information that the Ghost Spirit Sect had a method to enter Devilfall Valley?”

Marquis Nanlong's face then changed to a sullen expression, “We are indeed behind the matter. Before we journeyed to the Moulan Plains, I had known the Ghost Spirit Sect was researching a method to enter Devilfall Valley. Since they have suddenly grown hostile with me, I will not be polite.”

Han Li didn't give his own thoughts on the situation and simply nodded, his mind wandering.

As for Elder Lu, he frowned and slowly said, “However, I didn't

expect that the Ghost Spirit Sect would bluntly issue the Devilfall Medallions and sell them to various sects in limited quantities. As a result, they guaranteed themselves to be the largest power entering the valley. I fear the Ghost Spirit Sect plans on having these cultivators scout the way on their behalf. As a result, the valley's treasures will no longer be monopolized by them, but the danger will be vastly reduced as well."

Stroking his chin, Han Li smiled and said, "There is no such thing as a perfect situation in this world. Your actions have caused us more benefits than harm. It is likely the Ghost Spirit Sect's elders are gritting their teeth with resentment."

With roused spirits, Marquis Nanlong said, "Fellow Daoist Han's words are correct. This has caused the Ghost Spirit Sect to suffer for the time being. As for the rest of my hatred, I will have to settle accounts after I emerge from the valley."

Afterwards, the three began to discuss the movements of the Ghost Spirit Sect and chatted about the arrangements and details of entering Devilfall Valley.

...

Seven days later, the miasma surrounding the Myriad Link Mountains had nearly disappeared.

The many cultivators that had remained hidden nearby suddenly appeared in great numbers and made their way towards Devilfall Valley one after another. There were also cultivators who possessed lower cultivation and those that were unwilling to enter, who were merely taking advantage of the weakened miasma to search for spirit beasts and medicines in the mountains.

Devilfall Valley was located in the northwest area of the Myriad Link Mountains, spanning an area of tens of thousands of kilometers. However, the battle amongst ancient devil cultivators had caused the surrounding valley and sky to be layered with fearsome ancient restrictions. They were all incredibly difficult to

deal with and overlapped in such a way that it formed an impenetrable barrier.

The sole area that lacked these restrictions was the entrance to Devilfall Valley. It was three hundred meters wide and narrowed as it went tens of kilometers within. This path was originally easy to pass through but the effects of the ancient battles had ravaged the area, leaving it densely filled with spatial tears.

Glaring white light shined from some of the tears while others were dim and completely invisible.

The sizes of these tears varied anywhere from a few inches to several tens of meters wide, allowing them to engulf several tens of men without problem. As for the small tears, they were similarly incredibly deadly blades hanging in the air. Most terrible of all is that over time, these spatial tears would wander, as well as open and disappear intermittently. There was no pattern to their appearance.

Because of these fearsome spatial tears, almost no cultivators had ever made it out of the valley alive, even bringing countless Nascent Soul eccentrics to their end. The reason for Devilfall Valley's reputation as the most dangerous area in the Heavenly South was mostly attributed to its spatial tears.

But this time would be different. According to the Ghost Spirit Sect, one would be able to safely pass into the valley, creating a disturbance throughout the Heavenly South. Suddenly, cultivators began to eye the treasures with greed, and the several hundred Devilfall Medallions were cleanly divided up eagerly.

There were also a few cultivators that were unable to acquire a Devilfall Medallion and could only gather around this area in hopes that they could somehow manage to sneak into the valley.

Chapter 805: Cultivators Gathering

Vines covered the small valley's surroundings as a ball of white light shot towards it. Within the white light, there was a beautiful green-robed woman sitting upright on top of a snow-white bird.

In the blink of an eye, the bird arrived above the small valley and folded its wings, diving towards the dense vines below. The woman raised her hand and launched a spell seal down below, causing the scene to tremble with green light. The vines suddenly disappeared to reveal a green light barrier. The woman dismounted from the bird and vanished through the barrier with a flash of white light.

The barrier disappeared to reveal six cultivators all clothed in green as well. They were sitting around a five-pointed spell formation about twenty meters wide at the entrance of the small valley. With one of the cultivators sitting cross-legged at each of the spell formation's corners, it began to flicker with spirit light. The remaining cultivator was a long-bearded old man sitting at the center of the spell formation with his eyes closed.

Suddenly, the old man opened his eyes and looked up at the sky. There was a white light slowly descending onto them. A moment later, a green-robed woman appeared in front of the old man and saluted him as soon as she landed.

The green-robed woman lowered her head in respect and said, "This disciple greets her Martial Senior. The miasma on the mountain range has completely disappeared. There are many cultivators that have already gathered in front of Devilfall Valley."

The long-bearded old man twirled his beard and slowly asked, "Has the Ghost Spirit Sect made an appearance yet?"

After a moment of thought, the woman carefully replied, "Apart from a few, a majority of the Ghost Spirit Sect have yet to take action."

The long-bearded old man snorted and said, “Since the Ghost Spirit Sect have yet to take action, we must not move hastily either. So long as we pay attention to their elders, we won’t encounter any mishap. Martial Niece Han, continue monitoring their movements and as soon as there is a change, immediately report back.”

“Yes, this disciple will set off.” The green-robed woman accepted his orders without any opposition. After saluting the old man once more, she flew off on the spirit bird.

The old man watched as the green-robed woman left until she disappeared and his eyes brightly glinted as he momentarily sank into thought. The five cultivators sitting around the spell formation were completely unperturbed by the appearance of the woman surnamed Han. They all remained completely still as if they were made of wood.

The long-bearded old man didn’t find this out of the ordinary at all and closed his eyes once more.

...

On the top of a lofty mountain, there was a middle-aged, grey-robed Daoist priest standing on top of a boulder. He was staring in the direction of Devilfall Valley with a squint as raging winds blew against him.

The Daoist priest turned his head to look at two sinister puppets at his side with a trace of satisfaction. He muttered, “With these two Nascent Soul level ancient puppets, I’ll reap a great harvest from this journey to Devilfall Valley.”

With that said, the Daoist priest raised his arm and struck the puppets with a spell seal. In an instant, the puppets quickly shrunk and shot into his sleeve. Soon, the Daoist priest tore through the skies in the direction of Devilfall Valley as a streak of red light.

In another corner of the sky, there were three streaks of light

arranged in a row, flying towards Devilfall Valley.

If Han Li were to see the trio, he would be greatly surprised as he would recognize two of them. One was a sallow-faced yellow-robed old man, Ancestor Linghu of Yellow Maple Valley. By his side was a white-robed woman with a pale complexion and a chilly expression, the grand elder of the Masked Moon Sect and Nangong Wan's Senior Martial Sister.

The one that Han Li wouldn't recognize was the old man, who had a steep brow and a lion's nose.

The three were completely silent as they hurried on their way and soon disappeared into specks of light that faded from the sky without a trace.

At the same time, many cultivators began to appear near the Myriad Link Mountains, seeming completely confident in their abilities.

As of current, Han Li had already arrived nearby Devilfall Valley. He was sitting on a mound several kilometers away from its entrance, pensively looking in the direction of Devilfall Valley.

At that moment, Han Li used his spiritual sense to probe a radius of tensome kilometers nearby. He found that over a thousand cultivators had already gathered here with many Nascent Soul eccentrics hidden amongst them. While these cultivators weren't characters on par with the Three Great Heavenly South cultivators, they were all exceptional individuals who wielded strange and troublesome secret abilities.

Han Li wasn't so conceited as to believe that he had nothing to fear from cultivators that weren't on the level of the Three Great Heavenly South Cultivators or the Moulan Divine Sages. It would only take a single mistake for him to lose his life in the valley.

As Han Li pondered, he would occasionally take the measure of the entrance to Devilfall Valley. If it weren't for the cultivators

that were gathered there, Han Li wouldn't have believed that such a common mountain opening would be the entrance to Devilfall Valley. However, there were roiling grey clouds above the entrance that surged with spiritual Qi. It was an odd omen that left a cold impression on those who saw it.

From the outside, the entrance appeared only thirty meters wide, but he was only able to see three hundred meters into the valley when he attempted to probe it with his spiritual sense. A restriction of the valley had blocked him from seeing any further and he was unable to personally witness the so-called spatial tears.

Although Han Li could forcefully puncture the restrictions with his spiritual sense, he hesitated to do so at an area as dangerous as Devilfall Valley and cautiously withdrew his spiritual sense. Soon after, Han Li sat cross-legged on the mound and he closed his eyes.

Time slowly passed by until half a day later when Han Li sensed a familiar aura amongst the increasing number of cultivators that gathered there.

After some thought, Han Li was able to identify them and he frowned.

During that moment, there was a nearby voice that shouted with alarm, "The Moulan have arrived. The Moulan spell warriors also wish to search for treasures in Devilfall Valley."

Following that announcement, an uproar filled the entrance and Han Li felt his heart tremble. When he opened his eyes, he saw a strange flying carriage moving in their direction. The carriage's body was round and over sixty meters in length. It sparkled with silver light and was engraved with talisman characters all over its body. There were over ten cultivators dressed in Moulan robes standing in the carriage, revealing them to be Moulan spell warriors without a doubt.

When Han Li saw this, he wore an astonished expression. Although he had heard rumors that the Moulan were going to

arrive, he hadn't believed it to be true.

After all, the Heavenly South may have made peace with the Moulan but the battle at the border had left both sides with vast injuries. The Moulan had formed a deep hatred between many sects and without the passage of several hundred years, this hatred wouldn't easily disperse. Under such circumstances, it was rather inconceivable that the Moulan would dare to enter so deep into the heart of the Heavenly South to look for treasures in Devilfall Valley. Could it be that they had no fear that vengeful cultivators would plot against them from behind?

Just as Han Li thought this, the huge carriage arrived above the entrance to Devilfall Valley, clearly revealing the faces of the spell warriors it contained.

Han Li glanced at the two in the lead and came to a realization. With those two in charge, they had no fear of retaliation from common cultivators. However, it was something of a mystery as to Han Li why the Three Great Heavenly South cultivators would allow them entry.

The two spell warriors leading them were the scholarly Divine Sage surnamed Zhong and the woman surnamed Le who guarded the ancient lantern.

The flying carriage dropped on a small mountain not far from Han Li. After the spell warriors walked out of the carriage, Spell Warrior Le struck the chariot with a spell seal and it shrunk in size.

When the others at the entrance of Devilfall Valley saw this, they were astonished and felt the same surprise as Han Li.

Just as the cultivators watched the Moulan's arrival with cold and hostile gazes, light flashed from the horizon to reveal over a hundred streaks of light flying towards Devilfall Valley.

"It's the Ghost Spirit Sect!" Shouts echoed from those who

recognized them and the attention directed at the Moulan shifted toward the sky. As for Han Li, he also glanced upward with a cold snort.

The speed of these traveling lights couldn't be considered fast. They calmly arrived above the valley's entrance and descended three hundred meters away from it.

The lights disappeared to reveal over a hundred black-clothed cultivators, all of them Ghost Spirit Sect cultivators. The three leading them caught Han Li's attention. He recognized the one standing to the left, the Ghost Spirit Sect Master, Wang Tiangu. His heart stirred and he swept his gaze past the crowd only to spot Wang Chan and Yan Ruyan.

Wang Chan appeared to be in good health and still had all his limbs, but Yan Ruyan appeared somewhat sallow.

'Could it be the Yin Devil Execution didn't injure him? Or did he just restore his limb and hide it?' As these thoughts quickly appeared in Han Li's mind, he wasn't able to come up with an answer. But given Han Li's current abilities and reputation, Wang Chan could no longer be considered a threat. As a result, his attention turned to the other two Nascent Soul cultivators in the lead.

The cultivator at the center was a middle-aged man wearing wide robes whose harsh expression possessed an uncommon air of authority. From a glance, one could tell he was in charge. To his right was an old man with a pale complexion that had peppered hair, sharp eyes and a sinister aura.

While they were both Nascent Soul cultivators they appeared unfamiliar to Han Li, as if they hadn't participated at the battle at the border. However, the old man's mid-Nascent Soul cultivation caught Han Li's attention.

Chapter 806: One-Way Transportation Formation

The Ghost Spirit Sect's Daoist Shattered Soul hadn't come, to Han Li's surprise. This unfamiliar old man came in his place.

However, mobilizing three Nascent Soul cultivators was quite a show of force even from a sect as large as the Ghost Spirit Sect. But considering that they were trying to oversee an area as dangerous as Devilfall Valley, it was still somewhat lacking. Could it be that the Ghost Spirit Sect had made other preparations?

Just as Han Li pondered this, the Ghost Spirit Sect cultivators hurriedly scattered around the valley entrance, appearing to set up a huge spell formation. The nearby cultivators didn't disturb them and simply watched from the side. As for the Moulan spell warriors, they were also gather together. Their leaders, the scholarly man surnamed Zhong and Spell Warrior Le, were currently discussing something with soft voices.

Han Li stared at the spell formation with clear eyes and a calm expression. But a short moment later, Han Li's expression stirred and he looked to the sky with bewilderment.

At that moment, light flashed from the distance and a blinding streak of white light suddenly shot across the sky like a bolt of lightning, scattering any clouds that came across its path in a display of astonishing momentum. By then, the other cultivators also saw this shocking occurrence.

In an instant, the white light suddenly arrived above the valley entrance, fading away to reveal an azure-robed old man with an expressionless face.

"Wei Wuya!"

"He's also come."

"Could it be that the Nine Nations Union are also determined to

acquire the treasures in Devilfall Valley?”

An uproar surged amongst the nearby cultivators when they clearly saw the old man’s face. But what was cause for even greater surprise was how Wei Wuya slowly descended in front of the Ghost Spirit Sect.

When the middle-aged Ghost Spirit Sect Elder with the unfriendly face saw this, he smiled and saluted Wei Wuya. “Brother Wei, you’ve finally arrived. I believed you had been delayed by other affairs. If that were the case, we would’ve had no choice but to postpone entering the valley.”

“Since I’ve made an agreement with Fellow Daoist Wang, I won’t rashly change my mind. But it will be best if you spoke honestly. If the valley doesn’t have the items that you’ve described, don’t blame me if I become hostile.” Wei Wuya ignored the middle-aged man’s smile. It came as no surprise; the Nine Nations Union didn’t have a good relationship with the Devil Dao.

“Be at ease Fellow Daoist. I wouldn’t dare to trick you.” The middle-aged man ignored Wei Wuya’s bold words and continued to welcome him.

The scene caused the nearby cultivators to watch with astonishment. Wei Wuya was the grand elder of the Nine Nations Union and apparently was now working with the Devil Dao. If one didn’t see it with their own eyes, how could they possibly believe it?

Han Li frowned at the sight of this. Now if he were to clash with the Ghost Spirit Sect inside Devilfall Valley, his only choice would be to flee given that Wei Wuya was sided with them. This was something beyond his expectations.

As Han Li pondered this, he couldn’t help but glance at the scholarly man surnamed Zhong. If no other late Nascent Soul cultivators were going to enter Devilfall Valley, then these two would have the strongest cultivations.

The Moulan Divine Sage was calmly staring at Wei Wuya with his arms held behind his back, and it was unknown what he was thinking. As for Spell Warrior Le, she seemed surprised to see Wei Wuya appear here.

Although Wei Wuya's presence had come as a shock to many, the cultivators present were still watching the Ghost Spirit Sect disciples as they finished laying down their spell formation.

After half a day's time, the spell formation had now reached over three hundred meters in width as it was being constructed. As Han Li saw it being set up, he slowly became completely bewildered.

The spell formation appeared to be a portion of an ancient transportation formation that he had studied once before, but there were a few minute differences where portions were either simplified or more complex. It had clearly been altered greatly.

Han Li squinted his eyes and stared at the spell formation in silence. Although his attainments in spell formations were great, he wasn't unable to unravel the secrets of the spell formation in a short amount of time. He could only frown in thought.

Two hours later, the spell formation was finally complete and the Ghost Spirit Sect disciples began to place various mid-grade spirit stones around it. Originally standing to the side, Wang Tiangu suddenly stood at the center of the spell formation in a blur. He then slapped his storage pouch and took out a jade box.

The other two Ghost Spirit Sect elders didn't appear surprised in the slightest by Wang Tiangu's actions.

Wang Tiangu opened the jade box and revealed a golden-yellow spirit stone. The spirit stone shined magnificently and immediately released a wave of astonishing spiritual Qi upon leaving the jade box.

"A high-grade spirit stone!" Someone suddenly shouted with alarm, much to the surprise of the cultivators who heard this. Han

Li's expression changed upon hearing this as well.

The spiritual power of a high-grade spirit stone was only equivalent to about a hundred mid-grade spirit stones. But in truth, a hundred mid-grade spirit stones were far less valuable than a high-grade spirit stone. A high-grade spirit stone cost at least a thousand mid-grade spirit stones and were hardly ever purchased.

The reason for this was because high-grade spirit stone mines were easily detected. As a result, there were few that still existed. As of current, these spirit stones were only rarely found deep at the end of a mid-grade spirit stone mine.

Unfortunately, many ancient and formidable spell formations and restrictions all required the use of high-grade spirit stones. Even common spell formations were enhanced when activated with the power of these spirit stones. Additionally, a high-grade spirit stone is able to supply a Nascent Soul cultivator with a great amount of spiritual power. As a result, the price of high-grade spirit stones is incredibly high, and they only become rarer with the passage of time, nearly vanishing from the Heavenly South.

As for the peak-grade spirit stones from legend, they had already disappeared before the times of antiquity had come to an end. They now only remained in legends.

Han Li couldn't help but grow fervent as he saw Wang Tiangu solemnly place the gold attribute high-grade spirit stone at the center of the spell formation. Han Li had killed many cultivators but never once had he acquired a high-grade spirit stone.

Even if he attempted to find one at a market city or such, it would be a hopeless affair. After all, high-grade spirit stones were all stored away by few large sects in the cultivation world in case there was ever a need for them.

Now that the Ghost Spirit Sect had taken out a high-grade spirit stone, it appeared they viewed this matter with the utmost

importance. Of course, it now made sense why they were selling Devilfall Medallions at such an incredible price.

After placing the high-grade spirit stone in the proper location, Wang Tiangu returned to the side of the middle-aged elder and whispered a few words. The middle-aged cultivator nodded and then gave the command for the Ghost Spirit Sect disciples to withdraw from the spell formation. The disciples each took out a faint yellow formation flag after withdrawing from the formation.

With great familiarity, they immediately raised the flags into the air and quickly assumed a strange formation. At that moment, the spell formation began to glow as if it were accumulating power.

‘Could it be that this person was the true sect lord? Why else would Wang Tiangu treat him with such respect despite their similarities in cultivation?’ Han Li stared at the middle-aged cultivator and his mind began to ponder as he examined the fierce looking man.

At that moment, black Qi suddenly wrapped around the middle-aged cultivator’s body and he slowly rose into the air. He swept his eyes across the ground and said, “I am the Ghost Spirit Sect’s Wang Tiansheng, the Ghost Spirit Sect’s master. I won’t speak any nonsense. The path to enter Devilfall Valley has already been established. With the spatial tears already shrunken and stabilized, we can now enter the valley. Our sect’s many spell formation masters have thought long and hard as to how to create a particular transportation formation that allows us to easily enter the valley.

“However, this transportation is somewhat unusual. It requires the use of a metal-attribute high-grade spirit stone in order to activate. It is only with great generosity and a heavy heart that we were able to bring out such a spirit stone, but as a result, there is a limit to the number of people that we can bring. So long as you possess a Devilfall Medallion, you will be allowed to use the spell formation to enter the valley, regardless of your affiliation. I hope

Fellow Daoists won't blame me."

"There are other matters that I must first make clear. This is a one-way transportation formation. Because the teleportation location isn't set, there is a very small possibility of teleporting people into a spatial tear. If this occurs, then we can only say that your luck wasn't enough and we cannot take the blame. After all, the transportation method isn't fully researched and was something produced in a rush so there is a certain amount of danger. Those that are unwilling to brave the danger shouldn't use my sect's transportation formation." With that said, the middle-aged cultivator boldly folded his arms and immediately added, "If you do not have a Devilfall Medallion, don't think you can sneak in. When everyone with a medallion is teleported, the spell formation will be destroyed."

Although those words weren't spoken loudly, they were clearly heard by everyone in the valley's entrance. For a time, cultivators began to whisper or use voice transmissions to discuss the matter.

A young voice suddenly spoke from within the forest with a puzzled tone, "Since we are using the transportation formation to enter, how will we get out? Will your esteemed sect be placing down another spell formation inside?"

As soon as this was asked, many nodded in agreement. As for Han Li, he coldly smiled upon hearing this question.

Wang Tiansheng emotionlessly replied, "There is no need for this Fellow Daoist to worry. From what I know, Devilfall Valley has many ancient restrictions that may prevent you from entering the valley, but there should be little resistance in preventing you from leaving. There may even be ancient transportation formations that are intact inside the valley. If so, it should be a simple matter to use them to leave."

Chapter 807: Entering the Valley

After hearing the Ghost Spirit Sect Master mention the ancient teleportation formations, a few cultivators rejoiced at his words while others remained skeptical. After all, few truly knew of the internal situation of Devilfall Valley.

“To put everyone’s hearts at ease, I will have Quanzi and Elder Zhong go across first. We will have everyone else cross afterwards.” Wang Tiansheng finished, and waved his arm towards Wang Chan and Yan Ruyan.

The silver-masked Wang Chan and Yan Ruyan walked towards the center of the spell formation and stood next to the mid Nascent Soul old man.

Soon after Wang Tiansheng gave the command, the cultivators simultaneously pointed the flags down, shooting an arm-thick rainbow beam of light towards various points of the spell formation. Suddenly, the entire spell formation began to hum and the spirit stones around it began to brightly shine.

This scene stirred the nearby cultivators, but Wang Tiansheng paid them little notice. Wang Tiangu then brought eight Core Formation cultivators with him towards the spell formation.

In that moment, the other cultivators clearly saw that while the spell formation may appear enormous, it seemed to only be able to teleport three people at a time. As a result, the Ghost Spirit Sect cultivators had to be teleported in batches.

Seeing that the Ghost Spirit Sect had rushed to take the first step, the other cultivators grew tempted to follow them. However, cultivators were often cunning and cautious. For a time, no one dared to step forward and clearly wished to see others make an attempt first. After all, the Ghost Spirit Sect’s reputation wasn’t very great and the slightest mistake could lead to certain death.

Han Li stood up on the mound, taking in a better view of the scene.

Wang Tiansheng coldly laughed upon seeing the cultivators responses and he raised his arms towards the sky. The sky above him began to stir and the valley's surroundings gradually became quieter.

Despite the awkward atmosphere, the Moulan began to move. Over ten Moulan spell warriors silently walked towards the huge formation behind the scholarly man surnamed Zhong and the woman surnamed Le.

A trace of black Qi flickered across Wang Tiansheng's face after seeing this, but soon disappeared. As for the taciturn Wei Wuya, he calmly faced Elder Zhong and looked at him.

Before the Moulan spell warriors made their way into the spell formation, Elder Zhong flung his sleeve, shooting over ten streaks of azure light from his sleeve into the sky.

Wang Tiansheng then expressionlessly waved his hand and caught the lights, only to reveal tensome medallions.

Although Wang Tiansheng didn't participate in the battle at the border, he already knew of the Divine Sage's identity. As such, he took a breath and slowly said, "Good. The quantity will suffice. Please go in."

Elder Zhong nodded and several spell warriors moved from behind him, entering the spell formation. Suddenly, the Ghost Spirit Sect disciples floating in the air activated the formation and sent the Moulan into the valley in groups of three.

When Elder Zhong walked into the spell formation, he glanced at Wei Wuya and casually said, "If the target location of this transportation formation is random, then it'd be best if your sect's disciples don't encounter us."

Showing no fear, Wei Wuya faced the Moulan Divine Sage and

replied, “How could something so convenient happen in this world? If something like that truly happens, it can only be by the wills of the Heavens.”

“The will of Heavens? Hehe, then so be it!” Divine Sage Zhong coldly chuckled and disappeared with white light alongside two of his juniors.

After that was said, Wang Tiansheng glanced at the empty spell formation with a trace of a scowl.

When the others saw that the Moulan were able to safely use the transportation formation, they couldn’t help but lose their composure. Many cultivators began to take out their Devilfall Medallions and walk towards the transportation formation.

Over the span of a few minutes, the transportation formation flickered with light many times, sending over three hundred people into Devilfall Valley, about a fourth of the total number of Devilfall Medallions. As for the high-grade spirit stone at the spell formation’s center, it had already begun to dim; its spiritual power appeared nearly exhausted.

Han Li indifferently watched all of this as he stood on top of the mound and made note of all the cultivators who entered the valley.

Suddenly, Han Li’s gaze shifted to six green-robed cultivators that approached the spell formation. The one leading them was the Controlling Spirit Sect’s Grand Elder, Dongmen Tu. Han Li didn’t have a particularly good impression of. Although they had never engaged each other in a direct confrontation, Han Li felt that he should be careful around this person considering his involvement in dealing with the Moulan spy, Gu Shuangpu. But with his vastly powerful abilities, Han Li didn’t need to pay too much attention to him.

At that moment, the five green-robed cultivators escorting Dongmen Tu simultaneously turned their heads in the direction of Han Li. At the same time, Han Li’s assimilated second Nascent Soul

suddenly began to intensely stir. Were it not for Han Li's quick reaction to immediately concentrate and forcefully dominate it with his spiritual sense, he feared it would've manifested on its own.

At that same moment, Han Li used his spiritual sense to carefully observe the five green-robed cultivators. "Elemental Spirit Nascents!" These early Nascent Soul cultivators gave off a strange impression similar to his second Nascent Soul. As a result, he couldn't help but squint at them, not knowing where they came from.

Of course, Dongmen Tu also noticed his escorts acting strangely and he hurriedly turned his gaze to Han Li, happening to exchange glances with him.

A trace of astonishment appeared on Dongmen Tu's face, but he soon turned his head around as if nothing had happened and walked into the spell formation. As for Wang Tiangu, he appeared greatly shocked upon seeing that Dongmen Tu was being accompanied by five other Nascent Soul cultivators.

As for Wei Wuya, he closely examined several of the green-robed cultivators and wore a pensive expression.

Staring at these five cultivators, Wang Tiansheng asked with a deep tone, "Brother Dongmen, these Fellow Daoists are quite unfamiliar. Could you introduce them to me?"

In his cunning, Dongmen Tu casually responded, "I'll be happy to once the matter with Devilfall Valley is concluded."

Wang Tiansheng inwardly cursed him, but he knew that Dongmen Tu wouldn't tell the truth. Unwilling to let this drag on, he gave the order to his disciples to teleport the six Nascent Soul cultivators in two groups. In the instant that Dongmen Tu was teleported, he unconsciously glanced at Han Li with a malicious expression.

Although his action was well hidden, Han Li had clearly seen it with his spiritual sense. It appeared that Dongmen Tu was able to sense the Spirit Nascent inside his body. This would prove troublesome. With the Elemental Spirit Nascents following him, he had suddenly become a fearsome foe. It was a pity that the Wood Spirit Nascent still wasn't fully assimilated. It seemed that Han Li would have to be much more careful after he entered the valley.

Soon after Dongmen Tu was teleported, another group of three appeared behind them. Han Li wore a wry smile upon seeing them. They were Senior Martial Brother Cheng and two other Nascent Soul cultivators that were nearing the end of their lifespan.

Han Li sighed and watched the three teleport into the valley. Afterward, his attention shifted to the high-grade spirit stone that sat at the center of the spell formation. It had already grown mostly lightless.

Han Li's gaze flickered and without any further hesitation, he soared into the sky and flew over in a streak of azure light. He soon descended in front of the spell formation and tossed his Devilfall Medallion towards Wang Tiansheng.

Wei Wuya's figure blurred and he appeared a hundred meters away from Han Li. "Fellow Daoist Han, you've also arrived. With your young age, your prospects are limitless. There should be no need for you brave such danger."

Han Li calmly replied, "Many thanks for your kindness Brother Wei, but there is a reason I must enter Devilfall Valley."

Wei Wuya frowned and stared at Han Li's expression for a moment more before his expression grew sullen. "Since Fellow Daoist Han has decided, I won't speak of the matter further. I just hope that our goals differ." With that said, Wei Wuya blurred and reappeared back in his original position.

After seeing Wei Wuya speak to this youth with such a serious

tone, how could Wang Tiansheng not know who Han Li was? With a calm expression, he examined Han Li with shock filling his heart.

He had heard of Han Li many years ago when Wang Chan had suffered a massive loss which allowed Han Li to escape back when they both only possessed Foundation Establishment stage cultivations. After the passage of time, he had reappeared in the Heavenly South Continent as a Nascent Soul cultivator. Additionally, the youth had once again developed a deep hatred towards Ghost Spirit Sect and escaped their grasp once more.

Several years had passed since the incident at the Moulan Plains, while his reputation soared and he displayed abilities that left other cultivators in awe, raising him to become an existence on par with the Three Great Heavenly South cultivators. When Wang Tiansheng heard about this, the matter was far from good, and he took Han Li's name to heart. Now that Han Li had arrived before them, he wished to figure out who this person was.

Unfortunately for him, Han Li was already standing at the center of the spell formation with his eyes shut and a neutral expression, leaving no openings for anybody else to approach him.

This caused Wang Tiansheng's heart to tremble and he was touched with a faint sense of trepidation. Regardless, he was able to wave his hand with a relaxed posture and the disciples in the air activated the formation, sending Han Li off in a series of hums.

After a chain of teleportations, Han Li felt a wave of uneasiness but he eventually recovered his bearings and began to examine his surroundings.

He found himself near a mostly collapsed stone cliff and was surrounded by overgrown grass that reached half a person tall. In the distance, he saw a chain of short, unbroken hills. There wasn't a person to be seen. However, this wasn't strange in the least as Devilfall Valley spanned hundreds of thousands of kilometers. If two people weren't teleported together, it would be incredibly

difficult to find them. When Han Li turned around to look around about him, he couldn't help but wear an astonished expression.

Chapter 808: Death in the Valley

There was a depression not far behind Han Li. It was over three hundred meters wide and completely barren as if it wasn't created naturally.

With a changed expression, Han Li released his spiritual sense and quickly searched a perimeter of fifteen kilometers around him. After discovering no trace of any other cultivators, he looked at the depression and slowly made his way towards it.

When Han Li arrived at the edge of the depression, he closely examined it and soon a trace of alarm appeared on his face. This wasn't a depression, but a symmetrically round pit. The pit was filled with ash of an unknown depth and it was impossible to see through it.

Han Li stared at the large hole for a moment more with a pensive expression. He then formed an incantation gesture with his hands and swept up a thirty-meter-tall gale in front of him. "Go". He uttered the command and waved his sleeve, as the gale swept the ash from the center of the pit.

The wind swept up the ash and rock everywhere it traveled. A moment later, the hole's true appearance was revealed as a slab of dark-red volcanic rock that appeared incredibly smooth.

"This is..." At a glance, Han Li realized this was something formed from high-temperature fires, likely along with the formation of the hole. Shock appeared on his face as he further thought about the matter.

Could it be that something similar to a fireball created the hole? If he were to strike a stone surface with a fireball, something of a much smaller scale would be created. The result would pale in comparison to this, which would be over a hundred times larger than he could create. Could it be that the abilities of an ancient cultivator were so ferocious? As Han Li lost himself in thought, he

eventually sighed and shook his head.

After some further thought, he believed the pit was more likely caused by some sort of fire-attribute ancient treasure. But even so, this demonstrated that ancient cultivator's abilities were far greater than present cultivator's.

Afterwards, Han Li slowly walked around the stone pit once more, but didn't discover anything else notable about it. He then came to a stop and raised his head to the sky. As of current, it should be about noon, but there was no sun in the sky where he was teleported. Instead, it was replaced by an endless cloud of yellow haze that shined with dim light.

This didn't come as a shock to Han Li since there was some sort of restriction that covered the entire sky. He reckoned that as of current, he wouldn't be able to fly very high or else he would trigger the restriction.

Of course, Han Li still had to test his hypothesis. He took out a Gold Devouring Beetle from his storage pouch and tossed it into the air.

Han Li then raised his head and emotionlessly watched the beetle. When it had reached about a hundred and eighty meters in height, a blue lightning bolt suddenly appeared out of nowhere and struck the Gold Devouring Beetle. The insect promptly spun as it fell over twenty meters, but managed to unfold its wings and recover as if nothing had happened.

Han Li wore a pensive expression when he saw this. After commanding the beetle to return, he got his bearings and in a flicker of light, he slowly made his way west.

He didn't dare to fly quickly through this strange land for fear that he could come across a restriction or a spatial tear and lead himself into an untimely demise.

As for the matter of Violet Spirit and Marquis Nanlong, Han Li

moved out to prepare to handle both of their affairs: seizing the Spirit Kindle Fruit and join together with Marquis Nanlong to kill the Ancient Flame Toad.

Although the Ghost Spirit Sect Nascent Soul Elder had found the Spirit Kindle Fruit when he entered the valley, he wasn't able to precisely remember its location. It would take some time before they found it. And even if they managed to eventually find the spirit fruit, they would have to immediately refine the pill and then take it immediately. Along with the time it would take to absorb the pill's medicinal powers, they would need require several days at the very least.

Once Han Li acquired the inner core of the Ancient Flame Toad, something that Nangong Wan direly needed, he could seek out the Spirit Kindle Fruit with an unworried heart. Not to mention that he was rather interested in the remnant treasures the Ancient Flame Toad was guarding.

With those thoughts in mind, he began to spread out his spiritual sense to its fullest extent and his eyes occasionally flickered with blue light as he employed the Brightsight Spirit Eyes, allowing him to avoid the restrictions and spatial tears.

Although he couldn't determine where he was in the valley, he shouldn't be too far away from the other cultivators. Although the transportation formation was said to teleport randomly, the teleportations should only occur within a certain range. Han Li didn't intend on meeting with any other cultivators; he needed to head to the westmost portion of Devilfall Valley and meet with Marquis Nanlong.

According to Marquis Nanlong, although he had acquired Master Cang Kun's method to enter the valley, the method is quite dangerous and consumes a great amount of strength. The only benefit to this was being able to follow Master Cang Kun's route to the valley depths.

After some deliberation, Han Li decided to use the Ghost Spirit Sect's method to enter the valley. After all, the Ghost Spirit Sect was confident in their method to enter the valley given their wanton selling of the Devilfall Medallions, and Han Li wanted to use the safer option. From what he saw, their method of entering the outer valley was as smooth as expected, but he would still have to brave a bit of danger if he were to hurry.

Han Li continuously looked around as he flew, but came to a sudden stop as he looked forward and frowned. But his expression soon returned to normal and he continued flying forward, his speed unconsciously having slowed.

After flying over three hundred meters, Han Li stopped and glanced into the distance. There was a white arc of light suspended in the air, that was about three meters long and in the shape of a crescent. The arc of light was completely still and lacked any aura.

Han Li closely examined the light arc and he swept his hand against the air, sending a streak of azure sword Qi towards it.

Azure light ruptured in an explosion. As soon as the azure Qi and the light arc contacted each other, the azure Qi immediately disappeared as if devoured by the light arc. In contrast, the light arc appeared completely untouched.

Han Li nodded. It appeared this was a so-called spatial tear.

If they were all as visible as this one, they should be easy to avoid, but the indistinct ones were troublesome to deal with. Since he had encountered a spatial tear promptly after arriving in the valley, it only illustrated how prevalent they were. If he weren't careful, he would be certain to suffer.

Han Li felt a chill as he thought this and his body blurred. He flew a large arc around the spatial tear and continued on his way without paying it any further attention.

Unbeknownst to Han Li, over fifty kilometers away a fat old man

was staring at a foot-long arc of light. He muttered, “How very dangerous, to think that I teleported to the side of a spatial tear. If I had teleported thirty meters closer to it, I may have died. It appears I must take extra care. There must be innumerable spatial tears in Devilfall Valley.”

The old man’s complexion had paled after noticing the tear, but he soon turned his attention to his surroundings. Confirming with his spiritual sense that there were no other dangers, he got his bearings and flew off.

But just as he flew twenty meters away, an arc of white light suddenly appeared in his path. Before he could even scream, his body was split into two and filled the air with blood as both pieces fell to the ground. His face still wore an expression of disbelief.

Just as soon as the spatial tear had lit up, it slowly faded away and vanished from sight. If anyone else were to come, they would have no way of knowing that it existed.

In another area, three green-robed cultivators were flying back and forth around a pile of rubble. But regardless of the direction they flew, they were always blocked by a barrier of rainbow light when they reached a hundred meters out.

A large man with a large blade scar on his face couldn’t help but shout, “This won’t work! We won’t be able to leave. Those Ghost Spirit Sect wretches actually teleported us into this restriction. When we get out, we will have a proper discussion with them.”

A cultivator with high cheekbones stopped in the air and snorted. He coldly said, “Worry less. What does the Ghost Spirit Sect have to fear from a small sect like ours? Remember that from the start they said the teleportation was random and that if we were teleported into a spatial tear, we could only blame our luck. It is fortunate that although this restriction is powerful, it isn’t an offensive type. We should be able to slowly whittle away at it and escape.”

The scarred man shook his head and said, “But as a result, the other treasures in the valley will have already been taken. With our cultivation, we will only be able to search the outer valley for treasures. It would only be suicide to search the inner valley. We had to spend the entirety of our wealth in order to buy those Devilfall Medallions.”

After some hesitation, the high-cheeked cultivator said, “If that’s the case, then let’s destroy the restriction by force. Although it appears this restriction is somewhat profound, it is something located in the outer valley. It shouldn’t prove to be powerful beyond reach. Although we might lose a bit of our magic power, we’ll manage to get out.”

The final member of their group, a tanned cultivator, paused in thought and eventually nodded. “Fine. Then so be it. Second Brother, you have an offensive-type magic treasure. We’ll have to rely on you. Both of us will be assisting to the side.”

“It is best to leave this matter to me. With only a few blows, I’ll get rid of this wretched thing.” The large man was roused by these words and spat out a ball of yellow light. It was a small, finely cut stone block that was only an inch long.

The large man formed a hand incantation and pointed at the block. Suddenly, the stone block surged through the air and grew to a meter in length.

The other two then released a red and white streak of light, revealing them to be two sparkling flying swords.

Chapter 809: Matters Unfolding

“Go!” The loud man roared. The stone block revolved once in the air and struck the rainbow light barrier in a burst of light. The two swords transformed into streaks of light and followed after the stone block.

As expected, the stone block magic treasure was exceptional. Before it even struck, it carried the faint sounds of a storm. Soon, a booming explosion sounded out, accompanied by a pulse of various colored light while the nearby earth swayed.

When the other two saw the stone block’s might, they wore a hopeful smile, but their smiles soon froze on their faces. In the intertwining lights, the rainbow light suddenly grew brighter and suppressed the three magic treasures for a time before they were struck back with a clear ring sounding out from the rainbow light.

In the three’s alarm, they hastily regained control of their magic treasures and glanced at each other with expressions of dismay. The ferocity of this restriction was far beyond what they had anticipated.

The large man snorted, but just as he thought to say something further, the rainbow light surrounding them suddenly flashed and turned red. Before the three even realized what was going on, the restriction began to condense clouds of flame, suddenly raising the temperature within the area.

“What’s going on? Wasn’t this restriction not supposed to be an offensive-type?” The scarred-large man shouted in alarm, but the other two weren’t able to answer him. The fiery clouds above them had already begun to press down on them.

In that moment, the hooded member amongst the three began to summon magic treasures all around his body in an attempt to protect himself. He also slapped several talismans on his body, forming various colored barriers twinkling around him.

The fiery clouds then engulfed the three. Soon, three miserable screams were heard, only for silence to follow shortly afterwards.

A moment later, the fire cloud disappeared and the light barrier turned back to normal. There was no one amongst the rubble, only three magic treasures shining with greatly dimmed radiance.

While there weren't many cultivators that had encountered such misfortune when they first entered Devilfall Valley, over half of them that did had died. Whenever one encountered misfortune in the valley, they immediately feared for their life. There was even a Nascent Soul Elder of a mid-grade sect that perished as a result of a spatial tear in a moment of carelessness.

Ignorant of what had happened to the various other cultivators, Han Li was treading with great care regardless. But at that moment, he encountered a pleasant surprise.

Standing in the air above a wasteland with his hands behind his back, Han Li was glancing below him with eyes that brilliantly flickered with blue light. If someone were to see the blue light shining from his eyes, they would think of him as demonic, not that Han Li would pay them any heed.

It appeared as if there was nothing in front of him. He found nothing with his spiritual sense either, but with his Brightsight Spirit Eyes, Han Li was able to spot a meter-long arc of light. It was about forty meters ahead of him and shined with a faint light.

Han Li took a deep breath and the blue light in his eyes slightly weakened as his expression wavered. He was now completely certain that the Brightspirit Eyes were able to see spatial tears that his spiritual sense wasn't able to detect.

This pleasant surprise justified the large quantity of green liquid he had used to create the Brightsight Spirit Water over the years. As a result, he was now able to cleanly avoid the most common danger in Devilfall Valley. The sole problem was that he could only detect spatial tears when using the ability to its fullest extent. He

would overlook a spatial tear if he were even slightly careless.

As for the magic power consumption of the Brightsight Spirit Eyes, it wasn't much to speak of. However, it would be troublesome if Marquis Nanlong noticed something strange about his eyes after he met up with him. Han Li didn't wish for others to know about this ability.

Han Li lowered his head in thought, and something soon came to mind. He slapped his storage pouch and he took out a cloak that sparkled with azure light. This cloak wasn't ordinary clothing; it was a top grade magic tool that Han Li had acquired in the war.

This item had no other function than to conceal one's face, preventing any others from looking at one's true appearance. Of course, this effect didn't need a continuous supply of magic power and it wouldn't work against those with a far higher cultivation than him. Apart from the Moulan Divine Sage and Wei Wuya, there shouldn't be anyone that was capable of seeing through it.

After properly wearing the cloak, Han Li took another glance at the indistinct spatial tear and flew past it in a streak of azure light.

...

In a dense forest with trees reaching into the sky, there was a tall woman with a common appearance that was currently flying around the forest at a low altitude. While her face wasn't particularly special, her eyes were exceptionally bright and clear. She occasionally glanced around as if looking for something.

After a short time, the woman eventually passed through the forest and arrived at the other end. She came to a sudden stop with an expression of surprise.

"It seems this isn't the place. The signs left behind by the Ghost Spirit Sect Elder aren't here. It should be in another place. But to have me find the Spirit Kindle Fruit and wait for him, does he have other goals inside Devilfall Valley?" The woman then raised her

head and glanced towards the yellow sky. Her eyes seemed vacant as if she were absorbed in her thoughts.

Suddenly, her expression stirred and she shot back into the forest in a blur. She concealed her presence with several techniques, hid below a huge tree, and then remained completely still.

She saw three different colored streaks of light flying across the distance. Their speed wasn't fast, but it was clear that there were three old men travelling together.

In an instant, the three streaks of light arrived above the forest. The silver-haired old man amongst them sensed something and glanced down toward the woman's hiding spot.

"What? Has Brother Cheng discovered something?" A purple-robed old man with a wrinkled face asked.

The silver-haired old man replied, "It's nothing. There's just a Core Formation woman hidden down below in the forest. It seems she doesn't wish to meet anybody."

The purple-robed old man couldn't help but excitedly ask, "Since this woman is being so careful, could it be there are some treasures hidden inside?"

The third old man whose face was covered with azure Qi calmly said, "Brother Lin must be dreaming. This forest has no trace of a restriction, and there is only a Core Formation cultivator below us and it's a woman at that! Given how dangerous Devilfall Valley is, it is only natural for her to avoid us. Let's not involve ourselves and continue our search for treasure. We had best look for the treasures in the outer valley quickly or we will have to head into the valley's depths."

The retort hadn't angered the purple-robed old man. Instead, he smiled and agreed, "Brother Ou's words hold reason. We don't need to pay any attention to the female cultivator. We can travel faster through this wretched place but we still cannot use our full

speed. We won't be able to search through such a large area in a short amount of time. We can't waste our time." The silver-haired old man also nodded and they flew past the dense forest.

When the woman saw that they left, she carefully walked out of the forest and glanced in the direction that they flew off in. Violet Spirit muttered to herself, "That silver-haired old man should be Brother Han's Senior Martial Brother. I didn't expect to find him here. Fortunately, it was only a false alarm."

She and Han Li had agreed that she would first seek out traces related of the Spirit Kindle Fruit in the outer valley. Afterwards, they would meet up and search for the Spirit Kindle Fruit together. Violet Spirit had originally agreed to this condition with delight, but had felt somewhat puzzled by Han Li's condition. However, she knew that his other affairs had nothing to do with her and as such, she didn't ask too much about the matter.

As of current, she hadn't found her target in the forest. She hesitated for a moment before rushing in the direction the three old men had taken.

In another forest of Devilfall Valley, there were six black-robed Ghost Sect Disciples that were searching through it. Wang Chan and Yan Ruyan were among them. In the forest above, there was a pale old man floating motionlessly in the air. As for the Ghost Spirit Sect Master Wang Tiangu and the other Ghost Spirit Sect disciples, they were nowhere to be seen.

Suddenly, a cry of alarm echoed through a certain portion of the forest. Soon after, a disciple's cheery voice arrived at the old man's ear, "I've found it. It's here!" The old man's expression stirred and he flew over in a streak of black light.

When the others heard this, they all rushed towards him.

"Where?" The old man coldly asked as he stood in the air above the disciple, glancing around.

The disciple pointed to one of the trees and respectfully said, “Elder Zhong, it’s here.”

Elder Zhong’s gaze followed the disciple’s finger and he raised his brow. The large tree appeared rather peculiar. Not only did its roots divide into two, but a thick branch extended to either side of it. The tree appeared almost like a huge person.

The old man nodded and said with a stiff face, “Not bad. This tree could be the one, and if it actually is, we will heavily reward you when we leave the valley.” When the disciple heard this, he hastily replied with delighted thanks.

Elder Zhong slowly descended and flew twice around the huge tree and then stopped at its side. He stared at it for a moment more and grasped his fingers towards the tree. A trace of black Yin Qi slowly flew out from the tree and shot into his hands.

Elder Zhong smiled and commanded, “It is truly here. Call for the others to come.”

As time passed by, the other cultivators in the valley became further scattered. Apart from a few that had a specific objective in mind, they all began to randomly search in hopes of finding treasure.

But to the disappointment of a majority of the cultivators, only a few were lucky in their search around the outer valley. A majority were left without any gains. As a result, a most of them concluded that the rumors were false and all the true treasures in the valley laid deep in its depths. The more impatient and confident cultivators began to slowly make their way towards the valley’s center.

As for Han Li, his first day in Devilfall Valley was quite calm. As he traveled, he wasted no time searching for treasures. There was nowhere that was safe. It was quite possible that anywhere he went was protected with restrictions, so he found it best to stay away.

Although he flew at a slow speed, he gradually grew closer to the location he had agreed upon with Marquis Nanlong, and became aware of his location in the valley.

Chapter 810: Into the Valley

On the west side of Devilfall Valley, there was a small brown mountain with two men on top of it. A white-robed old man who had a kind face was sitting cross-legged, while the other was standing. He wore embroidered robes and a tall crown, and his facial hair dropped down to his chest. They were Marquis Nanlong and the Heavenpeak Sect Elder Lu Weiying.

Marquis Nanlong held both of his hands behind his back as he stood twenty meters in front of Lu Weiying. He appeared to be aloofly looking into the distance, but a trace of worry appeared in his eyes.

Lu Weiying sensed Marquis Nanlong's worry and said, "Brother Nanlong, there is no need to be so worried. He could have teleported to an area farther away and will take more time to arrive. Did we not personally see him teleport through the spell formation?"

Marquis Nanlong sighed and turned his head to the old man. With a helpless tone, he said, "Your words aren't untrue. However, you should also know that the many dangers of Devilfall Valley aren't easily dealt with, no matter how vast one's abilities are. We need this person or our journey to Devilfall Valley will be a waste."

Lu Weiying opened his eyes and grumbled, "We do need the Yin Yang Ring in order to go through the Greatnorth Essence Lights, but is the Ancient Flame Toad truly that powerful? If it isn't, we should've just taken the ring instead of bringing him along."

Marquis Nanlong frowned and said, "I hadn't personally witnessed how powerful it was, but from Master Cang Kun's records, it is said to be exceptionally fearsome. It is best that we find a cultivator with the ability to restrain the beast, or it will take too much effort and consume too much of our strength. I don't want to leave myself open in a place as dangerous as this."

After a moment of consideration, Lu Weiying said, “Your words are reasonable. It seems you’ve grown more careful and wary after what happened in the Moulan Plains. But from the records I’ve read about the Ancient Flame Toad, it wasn’t well known in times of antiquity. It was even said that it shouldn’t be very hard to deal with, but since Master Cang Kun had vouched for its formidability, I reckon this beast should be a mutant variant.”

Possessing another thought in mind, Marquis Nanlong didn’t entirely agree, “A mutant variant? It’s possible. However, I also feel that the beast didn’t have any natural predators in the valley and cultivated for countless years, resulting in its vast power.”

Lu Weiying closed his eyes once more and slowly said, “Since matters have already reached this stage, there is no point in further speaking about it. We must eliminate the flame toad either way. As for the passage leading to the flame toad, it is covered in Greatnorth Essence Lights. One wouldn’t be able to go through it without any preparations. We don’t have to worry about someone else finding the ancient cultivator remains before us.”

Marquis Nanlong smiled after hearing Lu Weiying speak so calmly. Just as he thought to say something in return, his expression suddenly changed and he hastily turned around to look at the sky. He saw an azure light slowly streaking towards them.

“He’s finally arrived.” Familiar with Han Li’s flying light, Marquis Nanlong was able to recognize him at a glance and wore a smile on his face. When Lu Weiying heard him, he hastily opened his eyes and stood up. It appeared the old man was also somewhat worried despite his calm appearance.

The azure streak appeared to be flying carefully. After a while, it finally arrived before them. The azure light faded away to reveal a cloaked silhouette.

Astonished that his spiritual sense wasn’t able to see through the cloak, Marquis Nanlong hesitantly asked, “Is that you, Fellow

Daoist Han?"

"What? Is there someone else that has agreed to meet you here?" Han Li rubbed the hood of his mantle and smiled. At the same time, his gaze flickered to Lu Weiying.

Lu Weiying also discovered the peculiarity of Han Li's cloak, but appeared indifferent.

"Fellow Daoist must be joking. Brother Lu and I have been waiting for you for a while." Marquis Nanlong was relieved to hear Han Li's voice, but he was somewhat baffled at the cloak that Han Li wore. Seeing that Han Li hadn't mentioned it, he didn't ask about it as it was only a minor matter. The three then began to discuss how to eliminate the Ancient Flame Toad.

Before arriving at the Ancient Flame Toad's lair, they needed to first enter the valley depths. The "Valley Depths" was actually a large area at the heart of Devilfall Valley that was confined within a particularly formidable ancient restriction.

As such, there wasn't really a path to enter in there. As light revolved around the border of the valley depths, one could easily find over a dozen paths inside of varying sizes. However, these paths were all layered with multiple restrictions. If one wished to pass them, they had to dissolve the restrictions one by one or face the consequences of using brute force.

The might of these ancient restrictions was fantastical and they all were merciless. One was better off if they didn't strike at them. If a restriction was attacked, it would retaliate without restraint. In the past, Master Cang Kun had studied these restrictions for many days with his deep understanding of spell formations, but he had eventually given up. Although it was still possible to dissolve these restrictions, it was too time consuming to attempt it alone.

Later on, Master Cang Kun came up with an idea. With a chance coincidence, he found a secret path concealed by Greatnorth Essence Lights. The path was well hidden, and the Greatnorth

Essence Lights would exterminate any cultivators who wandered in without any prior knowledge. But with the Yin Yang Ring in hand, it should be quite easy to enter the Valley Depths.

Han Li and the two decided to immediately take off into the sky and fly directly towards the valley depths.

Just as they ascended into the sky, Marquis Nanlong slapped his storage pouch and took out several bells, several inches large and all differing in color. He then hung them at his waist, much to Han Li's surprise.

Seeing that Han Li was curious, Marquis Nanlong explained, "These are response bells. So long as an area around a spatial tear fluctuates, they will sound out. Although it cannot respond to all spatial tears, it will give a warning for most of them."

Han Li nodded and the three began to streak through the sky.

As they flew towards the valley depths, the bells proved quite useful. Whenever a spatial tear appeared, they would immediately ring, alerting the three and preventing them from running across the tears.

However, these spatial tears had to be detectable through some way or another. If they were truly incorporeal, the bells would give no warning.

Knowing this, Han Li used his Brightsight Spirit Eyes to look for any invisible spatial tears. As a result, he discovered one to their side. When they flew past it, the bells did not ring. Having seen this, Han Li grew far warier. However, Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying were able to fly faster and with more ease due to the convenience of the bell.

Since the three didn't encounter anymore invisible spatial tears on their way, Han Li didn't need to provide a warning and he happily kept silent.

Nearly a day later, they arrived outside the valley depths in front

of an unfamiliar mountain ridge. The mountain ridge was a continuous link of over ten small mountains, appearing to be a miniature mountain range spanning tens of kilometers. Behind the mountain ridge, there was a crimson light that blocked the yellow sky. It appeared demonic.

“That must be the valley depths. The crimson light should be an extremely formidable restriction. We cannot provoke it or we will surely suffer.” Although this was the first time Marquis Nanlong had seen the crimson light, he immediately knew to be wary of it.

Han Li squinted and looked at the crimson light without emotion. Given how strange it was, he wouldn’t have been in a rush to approach it regardless of what Marquis Nanlong said.

‘But for what purpose did the ancient devil cultivators arrange so many formidable restrictions around Devilfall Valley? Just what was this valley’s original purpose and what secrets were they guarding? The valley may as well have been a prison.’

On a whim, these thoughts appeared in Han Li’s mind, but soon, he laughed at himself. What kind of monster would need such a huge valley as a prison? That was impossible. It was more likely that this was a stronghold for the devil cultivators.

At that moment, Marquis Nanlong led the way, flying directly towards two of the mountains on the mountain ridge.

After a moment, Marquis Nanlong raised his hand and the three stopped, slowly floating down to the ground. There was green grass and mountain stone ahead of them with huge trees and overgrown vines. It all appeared completely ordinary.

Despite the excitement on his face, Marquis Nanlong coolly said, “We’re here. It didn’t look like this originally. When Master Cang Kun arrived here, he deployed an illusion technique to conceal the passage entrance. I’ll dissolve the illusion now.”

He waved his sleeve and released a white jade pendant. It circled

once above his head before stopping. Then after he muttered an incantation, he formed a hand gesture and struck the jade pendant with several spell seals of varying colors. All of the spell seals were cleanly absorbed by the jade pendant and soon after, white light brilliantly glowed from it and it trembled, releasing a clear ring.

With a loud shout, a large white mist emerged from the jade pendant and swept away at everything in front of it.

An astonishing change occurred as the mountain rocks and the rest of the scenery began to distort as if a painting was being torn apart. With a ring, the white light swept away the scenery and it returned back into the jade pendant before disappearing.

Han Li and the other two then stood in front of an unfamiliar scene.

Chapter 811: Grey Mist

The verdant and wild scenery completely faded away and was replaced with a strange scene. There were now white stones everywhere, each of which were shaped into ovals and sleek. The larger ones were the size of a skull and the smaller ones were the size of a fist.

In the distance, there was a large expanse of dense grey mist that couldn't be seen through. However, the grey mist was confined to an area of around three hundred meters with crimson light to either side of it. The light pushed into the mist as it were a tide, but the mist would push back as if it were an embankment.

Lu Weiying slowly asked, "This is the passage that you were talking about?"

Marquis Nanlong hesitated for a moment and said, "That's right. It's here. Does Brother Lu feel that something is wrong?"

Lu Weiying glanced at the mist and said, "The crimson light is certain to be the inner valley's restriction. However, the mist seems unordinary. Did Master Cang Kun's records mention anything about the mist?"

Marquis Nanlong pondered and said, "No, he hadn't mentioned the mist. It shouldn't be too important."

Lu Weiying shook his head and wore a solemn expression. "I feel that the grey mist isn't ordinary. It's better to be careful."

Han Li then said, "Then let's test if there is any problem with it."

Marquis Nanlong stroked his palm. "It is exactly as Fellow Daoist Han says. I have trained many Eternal Flight Orioles and normally use them to search for medicinal herbs, but they will do in testing the mist as well."

Lu Weiying didn't oppose him so Marquis Nanlong took out an exquisite spirit beast pouch and flung it into the air. With a low

cry, a small bird with golden feathers shot into the air from the pouch and it began to circle in the air.

Marquis Nanlong raised his hand and tossed out an azure talisman, striking the small bird with it. The bird then spread out its wings and a small azure barrier appeared on its body. With a cry, the small bird shot into the grey mist in a streak of golden light.

Before the bird reached the mist, Han Li's eyes had already begun to shine with blue light. Making full use of the Brightsight Spirit Eyes, he glanced around and his expression made a sudden change. Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying were completely focused on the small bird.

The Eternal Flight Oriole headed straight into the grey mist and disappeared.

Since Han Li wasn't able to clearly see into the mist, he didn't send his spiritual sense into it due to carefulness. He simply turned to watch Marquis Nanlong's expression, who had closed his eyes and focused on his connection to the bird. His expression was calm, clearly revealing that nothing had happened to the bird.

Just as Han Li thought this, Marquis Nanlong's body suddenly trembled and he opened his eyes with a pale complexion.

Lu Weiying stared at Marquis Nanlong and hurriedly asked, "What, did something happen?"

Marquis Nanlong replied, "There is a monster in that mist that swallowed the bird whole. It seems to be..."

Han Li and Lu Weiying glanced at each other with astonishment.

Marquis Nanlong pondered for a long while before finally answering, "It seems to be a huge python. The grey mist should be a demonic fog that it spat out."

"..."

“A huge python? That seems strange. Why hadn’t Master Cang Kun’s records mentioned it? Could it be...”

“The huge python was something that arrived at the passageway after his time here.” Han Li finished Lu Weiying’s speculative words.

“Yes, that was exactly what I meant!”

Marquis Nanlong nodded. “Your words are reasonable, but how can something like a huge python safely exist inside Devilfall Valley? It seems to be an extraordinary demon beast, likely some ancient variant. If we do not slay it, we won’t be able to enter the valley depths. This will be quite troublesome!”

With a cold glint flickering from his eyes, Lu Weiying said, “It’s no problem. Since the grey mist isn’t a restriction, we don’t need to be too fearful of it. With our combined powers, this ancient beast shouldn’t be difficult to deal with. I reckon it won’t be much more powerful than the Ancient Flame Toad.”

“We may not know how powerful the ancient beast is, but we will have to eliminate it in order to continue. Let us deal with it together.” Marquis Nanlong then opened his mouth and spat out a small sword flickering with golden light.

The old man rolled his hands and summoned a brilliant white formation flag into his hand.

When Han Li saw this, he bitterly smiled, seeing that the two had already came to a decision to immediately attack.

Han Li suddenly faced an empty area and his expression sank, saying, “I don’t object to dealing with the beast, but before we start, how about we first ask for this Fellow Daoist to come out of hiding? How long does your esteemed self plan on hiding there?” He flicked his finger, sending several streaks of azure sword Qi to strike where he was looking.

In a series of explosions, a silhouette covered in yellow light

suddenly appeared, holding a large shield in his hand.

Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying were dumbstruck at the sight of this.

The silhouette in the yellow light was a lanky man that appeared over forty years old. He hastily bowed to the three Nascent Soul cultivators, but his face was filled with terror. “This is a misunderstanding! Seniors, please do not be angry. I only just arrived here and will immediately depart.”

As soon as Lu Weiying saw this person, he shouted in alarm, “Huang Tianming! It’s you!”

A trace of hostility appeared on Marquis Nanlong’s face and he sternly asked, “What? Brother Lu recognizes this person?”

Lu Weiying’s expression grew unsightly as he stared at the lanky man and coldly said, “This cultivator belongs to a small sect of our Righteous Dao Alliance. His cultivation isn’t anything special, but I heard he had acquired an ancient concealment talisman that is wondrously effective. I didn’t think this matter to be true, but here he was, completely concealed from us.”

“Seniors, I only followed you because I was curious about your techniques.” Hearing that they spoke with an unfriendly tone, the lanky man blanched.

“Since you secretly followed behind us, you can’t be up to anything good. Brother Lu, he is a member of your Righteous Dao Alliance. What do you want to do with him?”

Lu Weiying’s face turned expressionless and he squinted his eyes. “I intend on... killing him.” With that said, his body blurred and he disappeared without a trace.

When the lanky man heard this, he felt his heart drop. Out of complete fear of the three Nascent Soul cultivators, he covered himself in light and took to the skies.

At that moment, Lu Weiying had used some sort of movement

technique and appeared where the lanky man had originally stood. He raised his head to coldly look at the streak of yellow light that was flying away. Then with a tremble of his hand, he launched the white flag into the air.

The flag turned into a white wind as it chased the yellow light with amazing speed, whistling through the air. Soon the lanky man was overtaken, in an attempt to block the white wind, he raised his shield. After a series of fierce trembles, the shield shattered into fragments as the wind pushed through, cutting the lanky man into a thousand pieces, filling the sky with a bloody mist as his last miserable scream spread through the air.

When Lu Weiying saw this, he nodded and waved his hand, summoning the white wind back into his hand as a white flag.

Marquis Nanlong clapped and smiled. “Good. With that settled, we don’t have to fear about this matter leaking.”

Lu Weiying casually replied, “It was nothing. That mere Core Formation cultivator was deserving of more than just death for daring to follow us.” He then reached towards the blood mist and summoned a faint yellow talisman and a storage pouch into his grasp.

Lu Weiying took a quick look at the items before putting them away.

“We were truly lucky to have Fellow Daoist Han here, or we would’ve encountered unexpected troubles. It is no wonder Brother Han has such a grand reputation, given that he was able to see through such a powerful concealment technique.”

Han Li smiled and aloofly said, “It was nothing but luck. You two weren’t able to see through it only because he snuck in while you two were distracted.”

When Marquis Nanlong heard Han Li’s modest words, he shook his head and said nothing more.

At that moment, Lu Weiying returned to them wearing a serious expression. “Let us move quickly and avoid having any other unexpected troubles appear.”

Han Li nodded and with a flip of his hand, a sparkling formation flag appeared in his grasp. Rubbing his chin, he proposed, “When we kill the huge python, it will cause quite a commotion. I will first lay down an isolation formation so that the disturbances of the battle remain within the restriction. This way, we won’t have to worry about any of the cultivators nearby.”

Lu Weiying smiled and couldn’t help but offer a word of praise, “Brother Han is truly an attentive person. That will be for the best.”

Han Li immediately flew off and began to arrange formation flags one after another. A short time later, he had finished placing down a large spell formation. The spell formation’s main purpose was to dampen sound and spiritual Qi fluctuations. With such a specific and simple function, it was able to be placed down in a short amount of time.

When Han Li returned to them, Lu Weiying waved the flag in his hand and calmly said, “Since Fellow Daoist Han has finished laying down the formation, I will use the hurricane flag to disperse the fog. That way the python will have nowhere to hide.” With that said, he tossed the flag into the air and began to mutter an incantation.

When Marquis Nanlong saw this, he pointed to the small golden sword in front of him. Suddenly, the sword flew through the air and revolved once before brilliantly glowing with golden light. In the blink of an eye, the sword expanded to a length of twenty meters as it floated above him.

Chapter 812: The Ancient Python

Lu Weiying finished his incantation and pointed to the spell flag. Trembling, the flag suddenly unfolded, shining with a blinding light. Gusts of wind repeatedly blew around it like a storm, eventually gathering enough force to condense into ten or so white wind dragons, all rushing towards the mist with overbearing momentum.

As for Marquis Nanlong's huge golden sword, it shot out with a hum and began to revolve above the mist. It seemed Marquis Nanlong was planning to wait for the mist to disperse before striking at the ancient beast with a thunderous blow as soon as it appeared.

Han Li silently flung out his sleeve, summoning a small bell that flashed with silver light and flew off into the distance in a flash of light.

The wind dragons seemed to race each other as they struck headfirst into the mist. The grey mist roiled for a spell before being torn apart by a tornado from within.

However, the dispersion of the mist only lasted for a short moment as a strange hiss filled the air. Suddenly, a muffled boom sounded through the mist. A huge snake tail with the thickness of a water jar suddenly tossed one of the wind dragons from the mist and dispersed the tornado.

Then with two more thuds, the snake tail easily smashed two more wind dragons from within.

When Lu Weiying saw this, he was shocked and immediately grasped his hands in a strange incantation gesture, uttering, "Explode!" The remaining wind dragons suddenly flashed with white light and ruptured.

The explosive winds devastated the mist, scattering most of it

with ferocious gales and revealing the monster that laid within.

It was coiled up and appeared to be the size of a mountain. With its body revealed, the golden sword took the opportunity to silently strike at it.

As this occurred, Han Li shot a spell seal at the silver bell. In a brilliant flash of light, it suddenly grew three meters tall. With a clear ring, a silver wave suddenly rushed out from the shining bell and moved to engulf the huge python in a joint attack with the huge golden sword.

The python was slow to react and simply further shrunk into its coil in response to the attacks, remaining still.

Marquis Nanlong was overjoyed by the sight of this, and poured even more spiritual power into his sword, enlarging it slightly further. But before the golden sword could strike, a layer of green light suddenly enveloped the python's body without a warning.

A huge boom sounded out as golden and green light intertwined, but soon the green light overwhelmed the golden sword and repelled it. As that happened, the three cultivators were shocked.

Immediately after the golden sword was repealed, the silver soundwave struck the python's barrier and was scattered without effort. The two attacks seemed to have awakened it and it slowly withdrew its head to look at Han Li and the others.

At that moment, the grey mist had already cleanly scattered and the huge python had revealed itself before them.

The python had a body as black as iron. It was over twenty hundred meters long and was exceptionally thick with black palm-sized scales covering its body. It had faint green serpent eyes that currently held an ominous glint.

Han Li felt his heart tremble. Just as he thought to recall his silver bell, the huge python suddenly extended itself in a blur, and the silver bell that was a hundred meters away from it disappeared

without a trace.

Before Han Li realized what had happened, Marquis Nanlong's huge golden sword also disappeared from the sky with only a blur from the python.

At that moment, Han Li had already processed what had happened. The huge python had extended itself with fantastical speed, swallowing the treasures in the blink of an eye. It happened so fast that they were unable to react.

Han Li grimaced. The python was giant, but its movements were still amazingly fast.

When Marquis Nanlong saw that the sword was swallowed, his alarm was soon replaced with joy as he had spent over a hundred years tempering his linked magic treasure. ‘The huge snake’s exterior defenses may be formidable, but since it had taken the initiative to swallow the sword into its stomach, wasn’t it seeking its own death?’

With that thought, Marquis Nanlong hastily commanded the golden flying sword to display its full might within the python’s stomach and directly cleave through the beast. But in that short time, his expression froze.

Although his magic treasure was still connected to his spiritual sense, it was restrained within the huge python’s stomach and didn’t budge in the slightest. In that moment, he couldn’t help but grow nervous. After all, if his own magic treasure suffered any damage, his consciousness would be heavily damaged as well.

“Fellow Daoists, my flying sword has been restrained. This python is no ordinary beast. Be careful.” With that said, Marquis Nanlong solemnly sighed and he raised his hand. A dark green ring flew off from his finger and floated in front of him. The ring pulsed with light and was faintly inscribed with various talisman characters.

Lu Weiying was alarmed to discover that their magic treasures had failed and he hastily attempted to recall his spell flag. Then with a wave of his hand, he released several talismans into the air and they soon burst with white light, transforming in tens of blinding white fireballs that floated in front of him.

Han Li astonishedly glanced at the white fireballs and felt some familiarity towards them, but now was not the time to think of the matter. He then turned his head around and slapped his storage pouch, summoning four streaks of white light around him.

Three wolves, two flame oxen, and a green snake appeared in front of him. They were the six puppets that he had acquired from Daoist Heavencrystal form the grand trade meet. After he acquired them, he had yet to truly use them. Now that he faced this formidable ancient python, it was a good opportunity to test their strength.

Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying saw Han Li's puppets and momentarily revealed a trace of surprise.

The three were all vastly experienced cultivators. With a solemn exchange of glances, they all executed their various abilities in a joint attack against the python. However, an ominous glint began to condense from the python's eyes as it stared at the three cultivators. It raised its head and spat out a mouthful of liquid towards them, filling the air with a fishy scent.

In their alarm, the three hastily raised light barriers around them and held their breaths. In the next moment, they discovered that while the fishy scent was putrid, it wasn't poisonous. Regardless, it had still caused them to hesitate.

In that moment of delay, the huge python widely opened its mouth and began to suddenly inhale, expanding its body.

In the blink of an eye, the entirety of the stone and earth in front of the python was sucked into its mouth. The three cultivators were caught off guard and they felt a huge force pulling on them.

They were rendered completely immobile as they resisted being sucked into python's mouth.

Han Li's six puppets were brought to the python's mouth in the blink of an eye, offering no resistance to the attractive force.

A trace of surprise appeared on Han Li's face, but his heart remained calm. Azure light flashed from his body, causing it to grow incredibly heavy as it sunk into the ground. Then with a mental command, the six puppets brought to the python's side began to attack. The red oxens' horns began to flash with red light and shot four beams of light into the python's gaping mouth.

Just as the python confidently believed that it could suck Han Li and the others into its stomach, it was struck at its exposed tongue.

Red light flashed and a series of thuds soon followed. The huge python groaned and closed its mouth. Although the damage to its tongue took was uncertain, it had stopped breathing in for the time being.

During that moment of pause, Han Li regained control of the three white wolf puppets. Their bodies brightly glowed with white light and they regained their bearing on the ground with claws glowing with several inches of light. The wolves then brandished its vicious fangs before blurring from sight, flying towards the beast in streaks of light.

Clangs sounded out as the wolves struck the python's head. For some unknown reason, the green light hadn't appeared when the wolves struck, but the wolves shining claws and incisive fangs weren't able to harm the black scales; they were only able to leave behind white marks.

Then, two of the wolves immediately blurred and split up, shooting towards the huge python's eyes. They were bare and without the protection of scales.

With a quick purple blur, two muffled thuds sounded out. The

two white wolves were scattered with a fast lightning flick of the python's tongue and were sent flying.

The building-sized head of the python tilted to the side and began to close its mouth on the white wolf puppets. But just as it attempted to swallow them, the green snake puppet suddenly grew to forty meters in size and pounced at it. Additionally, the two red oxen had shot out another attack from their horns.

Provoked by the puppets' strikes, the huge python roared and it quickly swayed its head, spouting a black mist from its nostrils. In the blink of an eye, its entire head disappeared from view.

As for two of the white wolf puppets, they had taken this opportunity to run away. But suddenly, two figures shot out from the black mist and held down the two white wolves. They were two snake heads that appeared completely identical to the first.

This had all happened in the blink of an eye. By the time the cultivators realized what happened, the black Qi had already disappeared to reveal the pythons true form.

“This is a....”

“Three-headed Ebony Snake!”

“How is this possible!”

The three shouted with disbelief.

They faced a three-headed python that was furiously glaring at them. The center python head was hissing with its tongue as the other two heads were chomping down on two of the wolf puppets.

Then, the still air rippled as soon as the word “explode” was uttered. With two huge booms, the puppets in the snakes' jaws suddenly shined with blinding white light.

Chapter 813: Beheading the Python

Upon seeing the white wolf puppets had been restrained, Han Li immediately formed an incantation gesture and ordered his puppets to self-detonate without any hesitation.

While the scales of the three huge pythons may be incredibly hardy, the insides of their mouths were a different story. Given that the white wolf puppets were crafted from countless precious materials, the power of their detonations were nothing to underestimate.

As expected, the two serpent heads screamed in unbearable pain, but the middle serpent head was completely unaffected by the explosions, apart from being further enraged. In a blur of black, the green snake puppet flying towards it was flung forty meters back by a wave of the python's tail. At that same moment, it moved forward and chomped down on one of the red ox puppets, shattering it to pieces and denying Han Li the opportunity to detonate it.

As for Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying, they had finally awoken from their shock after seeing that Han Li's puppets continued to fight.

Lu Weiying was the first to act, sending his tens of brilliant white fireballs into the sky. As for Marquis Nanlong, he waved his hand and struck the dark green ring he had summoned with a spell seal. Soon, the ring began to blur and split into two, then four, then eight... In a single breath, the ring had created over a hundred phantoms of itself. With the true ring mixed among them, they shot forward in a wave of green light.

Han Li calmly waved his hand and summoned a pitch-black item that swelled in the air above him. In a flash of black light, it had transformed into a mountain that was over forty meters tall, and only continued to grow under Han Li's command. It was the

Thousand Fold Mountain.

Given the massive size and extraordinary defenses of the ancient python, this treasure should be more appropriate in dealing with it. With its incredible speed, Han Li first had to restrain it before he would be able to land a strike.

Just as Han Li pondered over how to do this, the python's left and right heads seemed to have recovered from the previous explosions and released two beams of grey light from their mouths. Lu Weiying's white fireballs ruptured upon being struck, but the beams of grey light found themselves at a deadlock with the resulting wave of flames from the ruptured fireballs.

As for the dark green rings, they swept past the battle between the wave of white flames and grey beams, while Han Li's Thousand Fold Mountain slowly followed after them.

The huge python felt threatened by the barrage of green light and its center head howled. Its body glowed with a layer of green light before widely opening its mouth and pouncing forward, sweeping away the dark green ring phantasms. But one of the rings hiding in the rear dodged out of the way, and in a blur, it appeared above the pythons' head.

Light shined brightly from the ring as it transformed into a streak of green Qi, striking down with thunderous momentum. Suddenly, the dark green ring massively expanded and constricted the huge python with all its might, sinking deep into the python's flesh. The python suddenly felt that seven inches of its flesh were constrained and felt an immense wave of pain radiating from the area. The main python head began to wildly thrash about as if desperate to break free from the green ring's restriction.

The two other heads were also affected by the pain and were unable to sustain the beams of grey light that were restraining the white wave of flames.

When Lu Weiying saw this, his expression brightened and he

took advantage of the opportunity to command the white flames forward. The wave of white flames surged to over forty meters tall and engulfed the huge python.

However, the green light covering the huge python's body was formidable, and held firm against the white flames. While the dark green ring may be restricting its head, its body had yet to suffer any damage.

Suddenly, black light began to shine above the python as a black mountain about a hundred meters tall appeared above it. The mountain began to revolve in the air, releasing black clouds below it and trapping the huge python.

The huge python turned sluggish within the black clouds as if weighed down by an immense pressure. Using the opportunity given, the black mountain began to fall.

Sensing that matters were far from good, the python raised each of its heads with strained effort and released several balls of light towards the sky to block the black mountain's descent, but before they could reach the mountain, they were dissolved by the black clouds surrounding them.

Unwilling to let matters stand and wait for death, the huge python used the entirety of its strength to slap its tail downward and launch itself out from within the black clouds. But at that moment, the white flames surrounding its body suddenly turned into several thick chains and wrapped around its body. The huge python was only able to fly about thirty meters before it came crashing to the ground.

Eventually, the mountain smashed down on it and the entire area around it brilliantly glowed with black light, preventing anyone from seeing what was happening within. The python's heads screamed wretchedly before the mountain smashed to the ground with a deafening tremble.

Marquis Nanlong revealed a smile and Lu Weiying sighed.

However, Han Li was frowning as he watched the scene before him.

Black light slightly faded away to reveal the black mountain. The huge python still wasn't entirely dead as there was still one head that wasn't crushed. It was screaming as it waved its head back and forth with all its might. The immense vitality it displayed as it flailed about in its craze was a sight to behold.

Lu Weiying snorted and waved his hand. A streak of white light fiercely shot through the air and arrived above the python. It revolved once in a flourish and then easily sliced through the python's vulnerable neck. As a result, the python's headless body sprayed a fountain of blood ten meters into the air before finally collapsing to the ground.

The old man's expression relaxed after finishing off the python and he muttered, "It's finally done. However, it is somewhat surprising. This Three-headed Ebony Snake wasn't as fearsome as the legends described."

Marquis Nanlong shook his head and hesitantly said, "It's possible that this wasn't a true specimen. Don't forget, a true Three-headed Ebony Serpent is winged and is said that each of the three heads also have different elemental abilities. This serpent can't have been genuine or we wouldn't have been able to deal with it so easily."

"Perhaps this serpent is a variant of another breed. Either way, we shouldn't delve too deeply into its origins. Let us head into the passage." Han Li calmly said. He then pointed to his huge mountain and it quickly shrunk, returning to his sleeve in a streak of black light, revealing the smashed corpse of the huge python underneath it.

Marquis Nanlong waved his hand and a streak of gold and green light flew back to him, revealing his golden sword and the dark green ring. The flying sword returned into his body and the ring

was worn back on his hand.

Lu Weiying glanced at the ruined corpse several times before arriving at its side. He casually reached out to one of the python's head and summoned a thumb-sized green core into his hand.

With a trace of joy on his face, he looked at the other two heads and withdrew a core from each of them.

At that moment, Han Li who had finished collecting his puppet beast fragments and Marquis Nanlong had arrived. Lu Weiying handed each of them one of the cores without saying another word.

Han Li accepted the item and took a glance at it before indifferently putting it away. Marquis Nanlong did the same.

Soon after, Lu Weiying turned the huge python's body to ashes with a single fireball and said, "It would've been troublesome to slay this beast if we were alone, but with our powers combined, slaying ancient beasts of this level shouldn't be much of a challenge. If the Ancient Flame Toad is this easy to deal with, then this journey will be quite laid back!"

Marquis Nanlong sighed and wryly smiled. "I hope it will be that way, but it is likely that the Ancient Flame Toad will be somewhat more troublesome. After all, it caused even Master Cang Kun to flee. Although he was greatly weakened at the time, the beast is certain to be formidable."

After some thought, Lu Weiying replied with a silent nod.

By then, Han Li had already flown around and collected the concealment formation flags. When he returned, he said, "Let's go. We'll find out how formidable the Ancient Flame Toad is soon enough." With that said, he took the lead moving forward.

Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying glanced at each other and closely followed after him. After all, they had to rely on Han Li's Yin Yang Ring to pass through the Greatnorth Essence Lights.

With the huge python slayed, the path was now open.

...

There was a three hundred meter wide stone road surrounded by a barrier of red light that was incapable of being seen through.

The three cultivators flew fifteen meters above the ground with a careful speed. When they traveled over ten kilometers on the road, the scenery changed and they came across a faint yellow wall. There was a pitch-black cave in the stone wall over twenty meters wide.

“It’s here. After we pass through it, we should find ourselves in the valley’s depths. The cave passage is over five kilometers long and is covered in Greatnorth Essence Lights.” Marquis Nanlong sighed and turned to Han Li, saying, “Fellow Daoist Han, we’ll be needing to use your Yin Yang Ring.”

Lu Weiying rubbed his chin and curiously said, “Since we know there are Greatnorth Essence Lights in the cave, can’t we find another way to pass through? Or is this the only way through?”

Marquis Nanlong shook his head and said, “There is no other way in besides this one. Brother Lu, strike the rock with your magic treasure and you will soon realize why.”

“Alright, I’ll strike it.” Unresigned, Lu Weiying flung his sleeve and released a white light from his hand, fiercely striking at the stone wall.

At that moment, Han Li clearly saw a rather strange short saber traveling within the streak of white light. It appeared to be a rarely seen flying saber magic treasure.

Chapter 814: Tailsilver Powder

Under Han Li's attentive gaze, the flying saber chopped at the stone wall in a display of blinding white radiance. Then with a slight change in expression, Lu Weiying waved his hand and recalled the flying saber.

Han Li clearly saw that the flying saber strike had left a shallow inch-long mark with faint grains of silver light floating around the area.

"That is..." Lu Weiying revealed a trace of surprise and hastily stepped forward to look at the saber mark. After carefully examining it, he muttered, "Tailstar Silver. This cave is made out of Tailstar Silver ore?"

When they heard the words Tailstar Silver, Han Li's expression vastly changed and he also stepped forward. He extended his finger and softly stroked the slash mark, examining the dust on his finger.

Han Li had naturally heard of Tailstar Silver as it was a material that could enhance the durability of a magic treasure. Its effects were only inferior to materials as precious as refined crystal. It was no wonder that Lu Weiying's strike barely damaged it.

Regardless of whether it be in the Scattered Star Seas or the Heavenly South Continent, it was something that was nearly extinguished.

Han Li stared at the saber mark and silently raised his hand. Over ten small azure swords shot out of his sleeve and directly struck the stone wall.

The other two were alarmed, but they immediately realized what Han Li was doing. With a series of clangs, over ten several-inch-deep holes appeared in the wall, each hole producing silver light specks.

Han Li momentarily revealed surprise and he said, “It truly is Tailstar Silver, and it is mixed into the rock. Moreover, it isn't evenly distributed so it isn't man-made. There should be a vein of Tailstar Silver within.”

Seeing that Han Li's swords had struck deeper than Lu Weiying's saber, the other both had a change of expression, but Lu Weiying's eyes betrayed a trace of greed as he stared at the rock wall in silence.

A fiery passion also appeared on Marquis Nanlong's face, but after some thought, he regained his calm.

Marquis Nanlong calmly said, “Let's go. We'll search for the treasures in the valley depths first.”

Lu Weiying hesitated and wore an expression of reluctance. “Go? Tailstar Silver is an incredibly valuable treasure. Wouldn't it be better to dig this out first?”

Marquis Nanlong frowned and faced Lu Weiying, speaking with a deep tone, “Brother Lu, how can you be so foolish at a time like this? Did you not personally witness how hard Tailstar Silver is? It may be possible that there is an entire vein of it, but a fist-sized chunk of ore can only be refined into a minuscule amount of it. How much time and magic power would you have to waste before it is worth it? And while this item may be precious, don't forget that what we lack isn't wealth, but materials to increase our cultivation and lifespan. When we reach our end, these possessions will mean nothing.”

Lu Weiying paused for a moment before repeatedly nodding in realization. He saluted Marquis Nanlong with gratefulness and said, “Brother Nanlong, you are completely right. I was overcome with greed and lost sight of our main objective. Many thanks for reminding me!”

Afterwards, he paid the wall no more attention and walked into the cave as if afraid of being lured by the Tailstar Silver.

Marquis Nanlong's expression relaxed and he called out to Han Li before following after Lu Weiyang.

Han Li was also reluctant to part with the Tailstar Silver ore and he unconsciously walked with slowed steps. Even though he had the Auric Essence infused flying swords and enough spirit milk to restore his magic power, cutting out enough Tailstar Silver ore still wouldn't be an easy task. And if he followed through, he would also provoke envy from the other party members.

Concluding that pursuing the Tailstar Silver would be unwise, Han Li could only sigh and follow his two party members into the cave.

At that moment, Han Li suddenly heard a voice from the back of his mind, "Hehe! There is so much Tailstar Silver. I've spent so many years looking for it, but I wasn't able to find any. Devilfall Valley deserves its reputation. The silver is able to be used in puppet refinement. With a bit of Tailstar Silver mixed into the puppet's body, common magic treasures wouldn't be able to harm them. You must take all of it!" The Monarch of Soul Divergence spoke with an excited tone.

Han Li bluntly rebuked him, "Take all of it? Old eccentric, are you dreaming? This is Tailstar Silver ore, not a vein. How can I take it away? Chip at it and take it away piece by piece?"

The old man snorted and said, "Since I've mentioned it, there is a method of course. Youngster Han, don't you have those Gold Devouring Beetles? I can teach you a method to control the Gold Devouring Beetles and have them drill through the rock and consume the Tailstar Silver. They will then spit it out as crystalized silver. This method was something that I had acquired from an insect cultivator I killed. This applies to all spirit insects, but it is particularly suitable for your Gold Devouring Beetles."

"Alright, then how about you teach it to me? I'll immediately have the Gold Devouring Beetles search for the Tailstar Silver."

Han Li immediately replied with delight, perhaps not only for Tailstar Silver, but also the mighty incantation.

“First let me tell you that regardless of how much Tailstar Silver you acquire, you will have to set aside enough for the final puppet I will refine. Also, you cannot waste it for other uses, particularly for mixing it with your magic treasure. If there is still Tailstar Silver after I refine the puppet body, you can use the rest as you wish.”

Han Li couldn’t help but smile and said, “Senior might not know this, but my magic treasures have already been tempered with Refined Crystal. It is quite a bit more effective than Tailstar Silver.”

The Monarch of Soul Divergence paused before yelling in alarm, “Refined Crystal? You had such a heaven-defying material? Do you still have any leftover? It will be greatly useful to me even if you only have a little bit left.” There seemed to be a trace of delight in his voice.

Han Li bluntly replied, “You should know that I use a set of flying swords. While I had acquired a large chunk of refined crystal, it was barely enough to temper my flying swords. There is nothing leftover.”

“There is nothing left? What a waste!” The old man’s tone was filled with sorrow and disappointment.

When Han Li heard this, he couldn’t help but inwardly roll his eyes. Using the Refined Crystal on his own magic treasure couldn’t be considered a waste, but since he was asking for a favor, he pretended not to hear this.

At that moment, Han Li had followed the two into the cave, but had managed to keep a distance away from them, intentionally or otherwise, to prevent them from discovering anything strange.

The cave was dark, but this was easily solved for cultivators by

pouring spiritual power into their eyes. Due to this, they were able to see clearly without any problems. The cave's width and height were exactly the same as the entrance, and the colors of the stone were a consistent yellow.

Along the way, Han Li casually used one of his swords to cut the stone wall. As a result, it revealed specks of silver light, much to Han Li's astonishment.

As Han Li walked forward, he learned the insect control technique from the Monarch of Soul Divergence. Although the incantation for the technique was cryptic due to being formed from ancient characters, Han Li was able to learn it with a bit of explanation from the old eccentric. With a sudden understanding, Han Li was able to smoothly employ the technique.

With the technique imparted, the old man grew silent once more. Han Li contemplated the incantation a moment more and verified that it was correct before casually brushing his sleeve across his waist and removing a spirit beast pouch. A short moment later, Gold Devouring Beetles began to silently fly from his sleeve and across the passageway.

With his other party members over thirty meters ahead of him, they were unable to sense Han Li's actions. In the time it took to finish a cup of tea, the Gold Devouring Beetles had completely left him.

Han Li then withdrew the sleeve and formed an incantation gesture. Following that, he uttered an incantation in his mind and spread it with his spiritual sense to the cave entrance where a large swarm of Gold Devouring Beetles was gathered.

The Gold Devouring Beetles suddenly shined with golden light and the flying insects soon grew vague as they tunneled into the stone walls without the slightest resistance. They were no longer in sight and the rock's surface wasn't damage in the slightest.

Sensing this with his spiritual sense, Han Li recalled it with relief

and began to quicken his steps.

After walking for a time more, they arrived at the start of a winding road. The other two had stopped walking, much to Han Li's shock. He hastily looked forward and saw that the passageway had doubled in width.

The spacious path was covered with stalagmites and stalactites that faintly released lines of silver light, illuminating the cave. The silver lines were exceptionally strange; although they were incorporeal, they each appeared to nearly contain their own form.

Marquis Nanlong stared at the lines of silver ahead of him and deeply sighed, "These must be the Greatnorth Essence Lights. Although you two Fellow Daoists might know something of it, I must warn you to not rashly use any spiritual power or treasures apart from the Yin Yang Ring when inside. If the Greatnorth Essence Lights sense any spiritual power leak, we will certainly die."

Han Li grew silent and he didn't reply. He simply waved his sleeve and summoned a jet black ring that circled once in the air before dropping into his hand, revealing a flicker of light.

Refine Crystal is a rare material that was found in chapter 466. It is something that is found from Ironfire Ants and is one of the top materials for hardening magic treasures.

Chapter 815: Greatnorth Essence Lights

When Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying saw Han Li taking out the Yin Yang Ring, they immediately blurred and appeared close behind him wearing solemn expressions. It appeared they wanted Han Li to take the lead.

Han Li held the ring in his hand and blew a mist of azure essence Qi onto it. In a flicker of black light, the azure Qi was cleanly absorbed by the ring. Afterwards, it flew above Han Li's head and remained still as it floated above him.

Han Li raised his hand and struck the ring with a spell seal. The Yin Yang Ring trembled and it began to fluctuate in size before growing to about twenty meters wide.

“Go!” Han Li pointed at the ring and uttered the command. Releasing a strange hum, the huge ring began to spring forward.

Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying gazed at the following scene with a solemn expression. As the huge ring came across the countless lines of light floating in the air, an inconceivable scene occurred.

The lines of light rippled like disturbed water. In the instant that the huge ring tread across the lights, it flickered with black light and caused the lines of light to distort around it, creating a passageway through them.

When the party saw this, they all smiled with relief.

However, Han Li was still curious about the might of the Greatnorth Essence Lights. After some thought, he slapped his storage pouch and took out a blue fist-sized pearl, a top grade defensive magic tool that he had acquired in the past.

Holding it in his hand, Han Li poured a bit of spiritual power into it causing a blue light barrier to surge around it. With a flip of his hand, the pearl shot forward. As soon as the pearl of blue light

entered the Greatnorth Essence Lights, the silver lines flocked towards it as if they had seen prey.

These fine lines penetrated through the blue light pearl from every angle as if nothing were there. A short moment later, the silver lines sparked and the pearl combusted, leaving behind a beautiful sparkle that eventually faded away to reveal the silver lines that remained.

Han Li narrowed his eyes and his fellow party members turned sullen at the sight.

Han Li's expression remained normal and he waved his hand. The huge ring flew back above them and silently dropped down, covering them on all sides. Afterwards, a barrier of black light emerged from the ring and enveloped the three cultivators.

"Let's go!" With that said, Han Li walked forward and began to move the Yin Yang Ring.

Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying didn't dare to delay the slightest bit while inside the barrier and closely followed after Han Li. Although the ring did offer protection against the Greatnorth Essence Lights, they didn't dare to raise any additional defenses and risk provoking them. As for Han Li, he maintained a calm appearance, but he still felt somewhat worried.

Once the huge ring entered the Greatnorth Essence Lights, the lights parted away as expected and they made way for the black light barrier. Han Li felt relief at the sight of this and turned around to see that his party members had also relaxed.

Han Li smiled and slowly moved forward with the Yin Yang Ring.

...

In an area of Devilfall Valley covered in snow and ice, there was a group of black-clothed Ghost Spirit Sect cultivators that were using their various magic treasures to fight against a giant lizard.

Floating closeby was the old man with a pale complexion

surnamed Zhong. He was floating in the air as he watched the Core Formation cultivators fighting in a frenzy.

Seeing that the seven sect disciples weren't able to dispatch the ancient beast after some time, he frowned and personally took action.

Elder Zhong formed an incantation gesture with his hands and countless strands of pitch-black Qi emerged from his body. They then condensed together to form a jet-black flood dragon that charged at the lizard with overbearing force.

Soon after, a huge net of dark green light glowed from behind it and enveloped both of the flood dragon and the lizard. Countless green fist-sized fireballs then condensed from the net and rained down upon the lizard beast with a thunderous explosion. Black light intertwined with green flames illuminated the area and then faded away a moment later to reveal a charred lizard corpse.

Elder Zhong swept his sleeve and blew the ancient beast over thirty meters away in a gale, revealing a crack in the ice beneath it. The crack led downward, revealing a passage underneath it that shined with a faint white light.

“Go!” Elder Zhong gloomily commanded. Then he shot into the passage in a black blur and the other Ghost Spirit Sect cultivators followed after him without hesitation.

Wang Chan and Yan Ruyan were amongst the group of disciples, but Wang Tiangu and the Ghost Spirit Sect Sect Master were nowhere to be seen.

Soon, the Ghost Spirit Sect cultivators all entered the crack in the ice and the scene above ground became calm once more. However, snow continued to fall down and a sheet of ice froze over the ancient beast's body, turning it into an unremarkable snow mound.

...

In the forest the Ghost Spirit Sect had first visited, Violet Spirit looked at what appeared to be a small familiar mound

After spending the time it took to finish a cup of tea lost in thought, she raised her head to look for any huge trees around her. Then, she lowered her head to look at the earth mound below her before shooting a streak of white light at the mound with a flick of her finger.

With a muffled peng, a three meter wide hole appeared in the earth in front of her. Grey ash scattered from the hole, revealing a damp hole with scorched tree roots.

With a smile on her face, Violet Spirit muttered, “This should be it. The Ghost Spirit Sect was able to find it much quicker than I did. However, they didn’t expect that someone would be looking for their tracks. They left in such a hurry that they left a trail behind.”

With a wave of her sleeve, the earth pit was reburied and she took out an azure talisman. After that she walked once around the large trees nearby and stuck it onto one of them. Then in a flicker of azure light, the talisman sank into the tree and disappeared without a trace. Finished with the talisman, she flew off after confirming her direction.

...

In a huge canyon, an old Daoist was looking down at the various-colored restriction in front of him and muttered to himself. There were two puppets with fiendish appearances standing motionlessly behind him.

At the other edge of the canyon, there was a mass of crimson light that continuously wavered. It was one of the passageways into the valley depths. The path was short but it was filled with several formidable ancient restrictions. Although the old Daoist was skilled with spell formations, it was likely he wouldn’t be able to dissolve the restrictions in a short amount of time.

Perhaps lacking the time to find another entrance or due to an immediate need to enter the valley depths, he began to test the restrictions but remained hesitant.

“What? Does Daoist Heavencrystal feel that he can't take on the restrictions alone? How about I help?” Suddenly, the old Daoist heard a gloomy voice speak from behind him.

The old man was Daoist Heavencrystal who had exchanged the soul stones with Han Li at Soaring Heavens City. As for the two fiendish puppets standing behind him, they were two of the ancient puppets that he had repaired, each possessing the power of an early Nascent Soul cultivator. When he had tested their power, it took great effort for him to subdue one of them. With these servants under him, he had gathered the courage to enter Devilfall Valley in search of treasure.

At that moment, Daoist Heavencrystal quickly turned around, startled from hearing a voice speak from behind. About two hundred meters behind him, there were several green-robed cultivators silently floating in the air. The one who spoke was the leading green-robed man that had a gloomy expression and long facial hair.

When Daoist Heavencrystal examined them he felt his heart drop. These men were all Nascent Soul cultivators.

Difficulty suppressing the amazement in his heart, he wryly smiled and said, “So it was the Controlling Spirit Sect's Fellow Daoist Dongmen. I do not recognize these other Fellow Daoists. Are they also elders from your sect?”

The Controlling Spirit Sect Master Dongmen Tu glanced at the two fiendish puppets and said, “You should consider them as such for the time being. Moreover, those two puppets behind you seem exceptional. Their power can't be underestimated.”

Daoist Heavencrystal cautiously said, “Fellow Daoist Dongmen must be joking. How can these meager puppets draw your

attention? Nevertheless, how do you plan on comparing with me?"

Dongmen Tu stared at the old Daoist and said, "Although I've resided in the Controlling Spirit Sect for long, I didn't make much outside contact. Despite this, I've heard of your reputation as a spell formation master. As lacking as I may be, I've also studied something of spell formations. Alone, it would take us too long to break through the restrictions, but together, the odds will be far greater."

When Daoist Heavencrystal heard him, he frowned in thought and still appeared hesitant.

Dongmen Tu's expression turned gloomy but he remained patient as he said, "What? Does Fellow Daoist Heavencrystal believe that I will be a liability? How about this? Let's have our cooperation be limited to dissolving the restrictions. After that we'll go our separate ways and I won't make things difficult for you without reason. And don't forget that even if you can break the restrictions alone, it will take up too much of your time. The valley depths are where one is most likely to find treasures, but I fear they will be swept away by the others by the time you get inside. According to my knowledge, this path to enter the valley depths has been well studied by other spell formation masters."

When Daoist Heavencrystal heard this, his heart stirred and he raised his head to look at the other five green-robed cultivators standing behind him.

He eventually nodded and said, "Since you made the offer, I will accept. We will work together to break the restrictions, but after we enter the valley depths, we will go about our own business."

Dongmen Tu immediately smiled and quickly said, "Hehe! That will do. Fellow Daoist Heavencrystal please rest assured. Given the power of your two puppets, how could I force you to do anything? After we enter the depths, we'll rely on luck in our search for treasures!"

Chapter 816: The Valley Depths

At the bottom of a steep three-kilometer tall cliff, there was a small cave that the party had just emerged from not long ago. After glancing at everything in front of him, Han Li couldn't help but wear a peculiar expression and mutter, "This is the valley depths?"

Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying stood side by side as they gazed at the scene before them, both wearing odd expressions. There was a huge mountain range before them with countless mountains of varying sizes that stretched as far as the eye could see. Additionally, the world that surrounded them had areas glowing with rainbow light, both in the sky and on the earth.

The areas of rainbow light varied in size, with some reaching several kilometers in size and covering the sky, while others were only about a meter wide and shined weakly, but in any case, all of them were extremely beautiful. What caused Han Li and his party members to be astonished were not the clouds of light, but the chaotic nature of the spiritual Qi around them. Regardless of the attribute, the Qi mingled together and gave people a feeling of immense unease as if the very world would lash out at them with a single wrong move.

Marquis Nanlong sighed after collecting his thoughts and said, "This is definitely where the ancient cultivators fought. The worldly spiritual Qi is thoroughly destroyed here and as a result, it will have an influence on all of our techniques."

Han Li wryly smiled and pointed to the sky, saying, "That is only a secondary concern. That's what is going to be most troublesome."

About a kilometer above them in the sky, there was a group of over ten foot-long arcs of white light floating there. Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying were greatly startled when they clearly saw what they were.

Lu Weiyng shouted in astonishment, “How can there be so many spatial tears? And how can they wander?”

Marquis Nanlong’s expression also grew unsightly.

After noticing Marquis Nanlong’s change in expression, Han Li chuckled and said, “This should be expected. Since this was the battleground of ancient cultivators, there should be more spatial tears here compared to the outside. Why else would so many Nascent Soul cultivators have entered only to never return? We can only rely on Master Cang Kun’s map regarding the path forward or else...”

“Brother Han’s words do make sense. We definitely can’t take any risks and tread off the recorded path. Else, we may encounter some invisible spatial tears there. However, there is still much to fear from the wandering spatial tears, but so long as we pay attention to them, they shouldn’t pose much danger.” After saying this, Marquis Nanlong regained his composure.

Lu Weiyng tensely frowned as he stared at another area filled with spatial tears. He pensively mentioned, “However, the number of these spatial tears is over ten times greater than that on the outside. Your words only apply if the invisible spatial tears don’t wander as well. If the invisible spatial tears roam and scatter like the visible ones, then Master Cang Kun’s map might not be safe.”

When Han Li heard this, he was stunned and turned his head. Blue light brightly shined from his eyes as he glanced at an area over three hundred meters away, watching a vague arc of light motionlessly floating there. He only calmed down after watching it for a while.

But then, just as he pondered about whether or not he should leak this information to his party members, Marquis Nanlong hesitantly spoke as if misunderstanding Han Li’s pondering for worry, “There is no need for you Fellow Daoists to be worried. Master Cang Kun mentioned that the invisible spatial tears don’t

move in his records.”

Lu Weiying’s spirits roused and he suspiciously asked, “Is Brother Nanlong certain? How did Master Cang Kun learn about it?”

Marquis Nanlong looked at the two and calmly said, “Brother Lu should realize that in the past, Master Cang Kun had suffered from grave injuries. What should come into question was how he was able to safely leave Devilfall Valley. By relying on a technique that he had cultivated, he was able to sense the locations of spatial tears before leaving the valley. How else could he have left with such grave injuries?”

Having heard this, Lu Weiying felt a wave of relief, “There are such techniques in this world? In that case, it wasn’t due to luck that Master Cang Kun was able to escape from Devilfall Valley.”

Han Li’s expression stirred as well and he sighed with relief. Marquis Nanlong’s worries faded away upon seeing this as he had feared that his party members would be intent on retreating. He was particularly worried about Han Li who he found immensely difficult to read. Since Han Li would be the main force in the fight against the Ancient Flame Toad, he needed to convince him to move forward.

With a stern expression, Marquis Nanlong then said, “Let’s go. According to what the records said, we cannot fly too quickly so it will be about a day of travel until we arrive at the Ancient Flame Toad’s nest. Be careful on the way there.”

Han Li faintly smiled and said, “Fellow Daoist Nanlong should be worried about taking care of himself, Fellow Daoist Lu and I will look after ourselves.”

Lu Weiying nodded in agreement.

Satisfied, Marquis Nanlong said, “Then let us set off. We’ve wasted enough time as it is.” He then got his bearings and wrapped

himself in a ball of light before slowly flying off.

Han Li and Lu Weiyng glanced at each other and also took to the air. They closely followed after Marquis Nanlong without taking even a step off his track as any deviation could lead them into a spatial tear or an ancient restriction. As such, the party was painstakingly careful.

The path taken along the way was incredibly strange. There were times it would go straight and others where it would move in a complete circle. But regardless of the path, they would stop every two hours and make sure of their location before continuing forward. Additionally, Marquis Nanlong didn't look at any jade slips on the way. It was clear he had already memorized the path.

Han Li maintained a neutral appearance, but on the way, he was memorizing every step of the path back. As such, if there were any unexpected developments, he would have a path to flee for his life. He reckoned that Lu Weiyng was most likely doing the same. After all, cultivators who had mastered the basic elemental cultivation arts gained a perfect memory. This made remembering some directions an effortless task.

Their flight continued for almost an entire day and hadn't encountered any danger. Han Li felt at ease, believing that the Marquis had acquired the genuine route Master Cang Kun had used when travelling through the valley depths.

As Han Li continued memorizing the path while following Marquis Nanlong, he diligently scanned his surroundings with his spiritual sense. He reckoned they had passed by at least four areas that were guarded with formidable restrictions along the way. There were also a few areas that seemed amiss but he wasn't able to determine whether they were spell formations or abnormalities produced from spiritual Qi fluctuations.

Han Li was quite curious about these areas as he knew that they were likely to contain treasures left behind by ancient cultivators.

Although he felt eager to explore these areas, he restrained himself.

Han Li possessed some understanding of certain ancient cultivator restrictions, but he also knew that they were incredibly formidable, and only the spatial tears posed a greater danger than the restrictions. Even with his Brightsight Spirit Eyes being able to see through, there was still a significant chance of him provoking a profound restriction.

Currently, common ancient treasures no longer tempted him. Having entered the valley, so long as he acquired the core of the Ancient Flame Toad, the remnant treasures of the ancient cultivator, the Spirit Kindle Fruit, and the Tailstar Silver, he would reap massive gains.

With the potentials benefits and drawbacks considered, Han Li abandoned any intention of doing anything dangerous. Then, his gaze was drawn over to Lu Weiying since he currently wore a sullen expression and occasionally glanced into the distance.

Han Li inwardly sighed. It seemed that if the old man couldn't acquire the items he wanted from the ancient cultivator remains, he would most likely search the valley depths. It wasn't a matter of greed, but rather desperation. Han Li knew that if his lifespan had also reached its end, he would take the risk. After all, if he succeeded, his life would be prolonged and his cultivation would advance.

As Han Li considered this, he couldn't help but show a trace of sorrow.

At that moment, Marquis Nanlong ceased flying and looked to the area in front of him, his expression wavering. Han Li frowned at the sight of this and faintly felt a sense of dread. He glanced around him and immediately stared at Marquis Nanlong's back in silence.

Below them was a small mountain over three hundred meters tall

and entirely unremarkable. Ahead of them was an extremely tall mountain range.

Marquis Nanlong had clearly said that it would take a day of travel to reach the nest of the Ancient Flame Toad, but they hadn't flown that long so it was clear this wasn't their objective.

Lu Weiying was puzzled by this sudden stop and asked with a surprised expression, "Brother Nanlong, what happened? Why aren't we moving forward?"

When Marquis Nanlong heard this, he slowly turned around to look at his party members. He bitterly smiled and said, "It seems we've encountered a problem. We might need to brave a bit of danger."

Lu Weiying's expression blanked and he bewilderedly said, "Brother Nanlong, what do you mean?"

Han Li stroked his nose but remained silent. However, he wore a curious expression.

"Fellow Daoists, do you see the two mountains in the distance?" Marquis Nanlong pointed to two mountains that were surprisingly alike.

"Of course we do. Does this problem have something to do with them?" Lu Weiying astonishedly asked.

"Precisely." Marquis Nanlong spoke with complete certainty.

Chapter 817: Ten Supreme Poisons

Lu Weiying noticed nothing out of ordinary about those two mountains and asked, “Is there something wrong with them?”

“From now on, we’re setting off to one of those two mountains. The point where they join together will be the Ancient Flame Toad’s nest. However, there is a group of Soaring Purple-lined Scorpions that dwell on the left side of the mountain range. Although they only number in the tens, each one of them is ferocious. I fear that we will most likely alarm them. It will be quite troublesome.”

Lu Weiying shouted in alarm, “Soaring Purple-lined Scorpions? Those fearsome insects that eliminated all the cultivators of the Ocean Mist Sect in the State of Wangsui?”

Han Li felt a wave of shock when he heard the name ‘Soaring Purple-lined Scorpions’.

Marquis Nanlong sighed and said, “That’s right, it’s those vicious insects. Additionally, this lot is much more fearsome than the swarm that emerged in the State of Wangsui. These have lived for tens of thousands of years and their bodies are entirely purple-black.”

Lu Weiying lost his composure and glared at Marquis Nanlong as he bluntly said, “Fellow Daoist Nanlong, please tell me you’re joking! How could we afford to provoke Purple-lined Scorpions? If there were only two or three of them, we could deal with them if we were careful, but there are over ten of them. Wouldn’t we be sending ourselves to our deaths if we approach them?”

Marquis Nanlong wore a helpless expression and explained, “There is one other path, but it is even more dangerous as it is filled with a large number of invisible spatial tears. It isn’t something that we can tread through. Since we can’t identify the location of the invisible tears, the Purple-lined Scorpions is

definitely the safer option.”

Lu Weiying remained dumbfounded for a long while. Needless to say, Purple-lined Scorpions were preferable to spatial tears, especially invisible ones.

When Han Li heard of the invisible spatial tears, he looked into the distance and his gaze began to wander.

Han Li finally broke his silence and spoke with a wry smile, “It seemed Master Cang Kun had taken the path with the spatial tears. He should’ve been able to avoid them with his abilities.”

When Marquis Nanlong heard this, he bitterly smiled and said, “Brother Han is right. Without Master Cang Kun’s abilities, we have no way to safely avoid the spatial tears. In comparison, a battle with the Purple-lined Scorpions is far less dangerous.”

Lu Weiying strongly shook his head and said, “That won’t do. We definitely cannot fight the Purple-lined Scorpions. You only heard of what had happened in the State of Wangsui, but I personally took part in the Purple-lined Scorpion’s extermination as a representative of the Heavenpeak Sect. They are fearsome beyond your imagination. Provoking all of them at once is a death sentence.”

The old man’s fear towards the scorpions was beyond what Marquis Nanlong had anticipated. He originally believed that they would prevail over the scorpions despite a bit of challenge. Now, he wore an expression of hesitation.

At that moment, Han Li frowned and began to recall the information regarding the Purple-lined Scorpions from the exotic insect rankings.

Soaring Purple-lined Scorpions were ranked fourteenth, close to the Gold Devouring Beetles. If it weren’t for the small number of eggs that the scorpions laid and their limited numbers, their ranking would likely be above the Gold Devouring Beetles.

Although they didn't have the same ability to devour everything like the Gold Devouring Beetles, their defenses were about the same and they couldn't be harmed by ordinary magic treasures. Additionally, their speed was amazingly fast and they were incredibly venomous, earning them their high position on the exotic insect rankings. Not to mention that these Purple-lined Scorpions had resided in Devilfall Valley for countless years. They had already reached the peak form of maturation where their bodies turned purple-black.

However, it appeared Marquis Nanlong only knew a smidgen of how fearsome these insects were. Contrarily, Lu Weiying had witnessed their power before and paled at the very mention of them.

As Marquis Nanlong's expression turned gloomy, Han Li coldly chuckled. Marquis Nanlong had only mentioned the Purple-lined Scorpions after they arrived this far. It seemed it wasn't done out of any good intentions but to keep them from fleeing. Since they had traveled so long, they would both feel reluctant to return without having made any gains and would feel obliged to face the danger.

Han Li continued weighing his options as he considered the danger of dealing with the Purple-lined Scorpions versus what there was to gain. After all, he would have to reveal his abilities to see through spatial tears in order to take the other path. As it was his most crucial ability for guiding him through the valley, he wouldn't tell it to others unless it was absolutely necessary.

While Han Li pondered with a lowered head, Lu Weiying stood in place with a gloomy expression, his fear betrayed from his eyes. Marquis Nanlong also glanced at the mountain with the Purple-lined Scorpions with a wavering expression.

For a time, the three floated in place without knowing whether to advance or retreat.

After a long silence, Han Li's expression stirred and he lifted his head to reveal a slight smile. Although Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying appeared absentminded, they were closely paying attention to the actions of their companions and noticed Han Li's movements.

Marquis Nanlong immediately turned his head to look at Han Li and asked, "What? Could it be that Brother Han has a good idea?" A trace of hope could be heard from his tone.

Lu Weiying also turned to look at Han Li with excitement. However, Han Li didn't immediately reply. Instead, he grasped his storage pouch, taking out a small green bottle. He asked, "Have you two Fellow Daoists heard of the Ten Supreme Poisons?"

Startled, Lu Weiying said, "The Ten Supreme Poisons? I heard that they possessed an inconceivable toxicity. Even if cultivators like us were to make contact with those poisons, we could come to an immediate end. I have heard that Wei Wuya mainly cultivates venomous techniques, allowing him to utilize one of the Ten Supreme Poisons, Corpse Venom. When other cultivators fight him, they dare not get too close to him or they risk perishing without warning."

Marquis Nanlong looked at the small bottle in Han Li's hand and quickly said, "However, I heard that a few of the Ten Supreme Poisons had other miraculous uses apart from their deadly applications. Could it be that Fellow Daoist Han has one of these poisons?"

Han Li raised the small bottle and explained, "It seems there is no need for me to say anything. As you've already guessed, this bottle contains one of the Ten Supreme Poisons, Jadedove. It is said that this poison is refined from the saliva of a demon bird with a jade beak."

"Brother Han means to say..." A trace of happiness appeared on Lu Weiying's face.

Han Li promptly answered, “The Purple-lined Scorpions may be durable, but so long as we use the poison to draw them away from the mountains, it will give us the opportunity to entirely avoid them.”

“How can we draw them away with the poison? Oh, hehe. I forgot that Fellow Daoist was skilled in puppet techniques. Smearing a few puppets with the poison should be enough to attract the scorpions.” At that moment Marquis Nanlong smiled.

Once that was said, Han Li’s expression remained unchanged as he mused, ‘Marquis Nanlong speaks of the matter quite easily and has pushed it completely onto me with only a few words. Especially since his Eternal Flight Orioles would do just as well. Last time, several of my puppets were destroyed in the fight against the huge python.’

Although Han Li felt somewhat dissatisfied, he calmly nodded. Because this was but a small matter, he wasn’t willing to have a falling out over it. After all, they were still only halfway to their objective, and the poison was originally one of the treasures left behind by Master Cang Kun after all.

With Han Li’s medicinal experience, he was able to recognize the poison with a single sniff and had immediately put it away. Now that he thought about it, it was quite possible that Master Cang Kun had left behind the poison in preparation to deal with the Purple-lined Scorpions.

However, it seemed excessively affectionate and out of character for Master Cang Kun to scheme every step for his descendants to acquire treasure. Having recalled Master Cang Kun’s ruins, he remembered the portrait of the three-headed six-armed demon beast, feeling that there was something mysterious about it. Since Marquis Nanlong had previously said that he was a descendant of Master Cang Kun, he should know something of it.

But regardless of whatever was amiss, Han Li was only concerned

with acquiring the core of the Ancient Flame Toad. He wouldn't involve himself in matters that didn't concern him and risk attracting problems to himself.

As Han Li came to this conclusion, his hands continued to move. With a casual slap of his storage pouch, he summoned five streaks of light from his storage pouch, revealing themselves to be huge ape puppets.

Han Li promptly took out several small jade bottles and poured a drop of the Jadedove poison into each of them before properly sealing the bottles. He then gave them to the ape puppets to tightly grasp.

Then under the guidance of Marquis Nanlong, Han Li ordered his huge ape puppets to silently make their way to the left mountaintop.

After they made it part of the way, Han Li turned to his party and said, "Let us set out too. We can't be too far away from the puppets. When the puppets attract the scorpions, we'll have to move as quickly as possible across the mountain or we may miss our chance."

Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying raised no objections and closely followed after the ape puppets alongside him.

Soon, the ape puppets arrived at the mountain peak with Han Li and the others a couple kilometers away in concealment. At that moment, the puppets used the entirety of their strength to crush the small bottles in their hands.

Suddenly, a putrid smell immediately spread through the mountain and the ape puppets flew off to one side of the mountain.

Chapter 818: Lava

Although Han Li's plan seemed reasonable, it wasn't guaranteed that the poison would have any effect. As a matter of fact, Han Li wasn't completely certain of the poison itself. After all, everything he knew of the Ten Supreme Poisons was from records. He hadn't personally experienced them.

A moment later, any doubts the three cultivators possessed were completely banished. When the huge ape puppets had flown a hundred meters, the previously still mountain was filled with bewildered screams.

As soon as Han Li heard them, he suddenly felt the Qi and blood in his body boil while his minded cloud over; he nearly fell from the sky. In his alarm, he hastily circulated the entirety of the spiritual Qi in his body and stopped himself from falling. He then turned his head to look at his party members with his Brightsight Eyes. They weren't in any better shape and their bodies also shook several times before they managed to recover.

Han Li frowned, overwhelmed with shock. That strange scream attack hadn't targeted his spiritual sense but the Qi that the body possessed. Despite how powerful his spiritual sense was, it had no method of blocking this scream attack. It came as a surprise to him that the Purple-lined Scorpions possessed this innate ability. It was clear to see that the records didn't describe everything.

As Han Li was mulling over what had happened, he saw ten or so purple-black streaks shoot out from the mountain and chase after the huge ape puppets in a blur. In that moment, Han Li hastily ordered the puppets to fly at their greatest speed and tear through the sky in streaks of white light.

Although it was only for an instant, Han Li was able to roughly see the purple-black streaks. In addition to their astonishing three-meter-long bodies, they had a pair of transparent wings and a

purple-black carapace that shined with light. Aside from their size and wings, they appeared completely the same as an ordinary scorpion.

The scorpion at the very front of the swarm was twice as large as the others, appearing to be their leader. With the dreadful appearance of yellow mist trailing from its mouth, Han Li couldn't help but stare at it.

The huge apes were clearly slower than the purple insects, but they had a head start. They drew the Purple-lined Scorpions away for the time being and soon became black dots in the distance.

Soon, Han Li loudly shouted, "Go! Some of the puppets have already been caught in restrictions. They will be overtaken soon." As soon as that was said, Han Li ceased concealing himself and shot forward, streaking through the air. His other two party members immediately set out after him, making their way to the mountaintop.

All three knew that if they didn't rush past the mountain in this instant, it would be extremely troublesome given the speed of the Purple-lined Scorpions. Fortunately, they all moved quickly. Even without using the Thunderstorm Wings, Han Li was able to fly towards the mountain in the blink of an eye with his deeper cultivation.

At that moment, he felt the connections to his ape puppets disappear one by one. Dread filling his heart, Han Li sped past the scorpions' nest.

When the cultivators made it to the other side of the mountain, they felt a wave of relief.

Marquis Nanlong smiled and said, "Fortunately, thanks to Brother Han's Jadedove Poison and his puppets, we were able to make it past that trial. It would've been quite a hassle otherwise."

Han Li looked at Marquis Nanlong and calmly said, "It was

nothing. It was only a matter of chance.” Han Li skirted over the matter, knowing that the Jadedove Poison was originally something that Master Cang Kun had left behind.

Lu Weiyng also complimented Han Li for easily resolving the matter. Han Li smiled and muttered a few words in response before heading on their way.

After continuing on for half a day without anything else happening, the temperature in the air began to rise.

The mountain ridge also became verdant as they continued forward, a stark contrast to the barren land that had surrounded them before.

Eventually, they arrived at a point where even the mountain rocks had become a fire-red color. A few of the nearby mountains even had cracks glowing with lava scattered across them that released burning air and grey ash like a prison of scorching earth.

Han Li and Lu Weiyng revealed surprise upon seeing this, but Marquis Nanlong remained calm as he knew that they hadn’t deviated from the path.

Not long after, the three arrived at a huge red mountain that was over ten kilometers tall. Most of the mountain was covered in glowing red clouds and was surrounded by much smaller mountains, making it appear far more prominent.

When Marquis Nanlong saw the mountain, he stopped flying and the light surrounding him vanished. Han Li and the old man glanced at each other with excitement, knowing that they had arrived.

Marquis Nanlong let out a long sigh and he turned around, saying, “Fellow Daoists, there is a cave below the mountain, which is the nest of the Ancient Flame Toad and where the ancient cultivator remains reside. It is said that the creature is powerful. Let’s talk about how we should deal with it.”

“Below the mountain?” Han Li raised his brow when he heard this and he soon spread out his spiritual sense. As expected, there was a huge fire-red cave inside the mountain that occasionally released waves of burning winds. Fearing that any further prying would alert the flame toad within, Han Li withdrew his spiritual sense.

Lu Weiying quickly said, “What is there to discuss? Fellow Daoist Han will take charge with his ice attribute techniques and we will provide support in slaying the flame toad.”

“Brother Lu, this matter isn’t so simple. According to Cang Kun’s records, the Ancient Flame Toad’s nest is half submerged in lava. The beast will be able to flee into the lava when it is injured and quickly recover. Additionally, we will not have the advantage in that environment. Our best plan of action would be to place down a spell formation and draw the toad out of its nest. I have prepared an ice-attribute spell formation precisely for this reason.”

Lu Weiying raised no objections after hearing the Marquis and Han Li didn’t find anything amiss about it either. With their plan of attack decided, they began to make preparations. In addition to Marquis Nanlong’s formation, Han Li also placed down his own spell formations to deal with any unexpected occurrences.

With that done, the cultivators concealed themselves as they waited for Han Li to lure the flame toad out of its cave.

Han Li slapped his storage pouch and took out his remaining white wolf puppet. He then sat down near the edge of the spell formation and sent the puppet into the mountain cave.

Chapter 819: Lure

Controlling the puppet with a trace of his spiritual sense, Han Li was able to clearly see the entirety of the cave's interior.

There was a natural made tunnel that was about thirty meters long ahead of the wolf puppet. The stone walls were black and red and there were occasional threads of flame that leaked through cracks, causing the nearby air to be warped by heat. Han Li was convinced that if weaker cultivators were to enter the passage, they wouldn't be able to defend against the heat and would shortly lose consciousness.

Since the white wolf was a mechanical puppet, the problem didn't apply to it. Not long after, it arrived in an underground world of red.

The area was a kilometer wide, but a majority of it was submerged in boiling lava. The sound of it splattering inspired a fear of being boiled alive.

Surrounding the lake was glowing scarlet ground that was covered in sparse greenery. The plants came as a surprise, but it was clear to see that it was a rare type of spirit grass. However, the white wolf puppet showed no interest in the spirit grass and focused on a protrusion in the lava.

The monster was currently lying on its back and was loudly breathing in its sleep. Its body was ten meters wide, nearly twenty meters long. With the addition of its glowing fire-red body, it possessed an unordinary aura. Occasionally when the beast breathed, it would release a cloud of red mist around itself.

'This must be the Ancient Flame Toad!' Han Li was able to clearly see the beast and carefully examined it for a long while. Afterwards, he turned his attention towards the stone platform jutting from the Lava Lake.

The stone platform appeared ancient. Although the platform's surroundings were caved with many decorative designs and talisman characters, its four corners were already worn down. At the center of the platform, were the remains of a green-robed cultivator, haphazardly lying down.

The robes were simple but had a strange style. At a glance, one could tell they weren't clothes from a modern cultivator. Additionally, despite the years that had passed, the gown still appeared new as it glowed with a faint green light. The remains inside the robes had long rotted away, only revealing translucent bones as clear as crystal.

Having closely examined the remains, Han Li glanced at the Ancient Flame Toad before withdrawing his strand of spiritual sense from the puppet and having the spiritual sense sneak towards the remains.

He decided to first take a look at whether or not the body possessed any treasures. At first glance, he wasn't able to discover the existence or any treasures or a storage pouch on the body, much to his worry. However, it was possible the treasures were hidden near the stone platform or were perhaps hidden inside the green robes.

The strand of spiritual sense arrived above the remains, but when it sank down to them, a change occurred. The green robes brightly shone and created a barrier of green light around it, repelling the strand of spiritual sense and causing a wave of odd spiritual Qi fluctuations nearby.

The sleeping Ancient Flame Toad seemed to detect this and quickly opened its eyes, glancing around to find the white wolf puppet at the cave's entrance.

'Not good!' Han Li shouted in his mind. The strand of spiritual sense immediately returned to the wolf puppet and the puppet hastily turned around and fled in a streak of white light.

At that same time, the round flame toad flipped over and leaped into the air before landing on a huge rock in a crouched position. It glanced at the white wolf's afterimage and furiously croaked. Soon after, it pounced off the rock and chased after the puppet while enveloped in a red mist.

"The Ancient Flame Toad is on its way. Be on guard." Hidden near the spell formation, Han Li's lips moved as he sent a voice transmission to his two party members. Their faces froze as they glanced at the mountain from a distance.

A white streak shot out from within and directly flew towards the party of cultivators. A moment later, a ball wrapped in red mist flew out from the cave, closely chasing after it. Its speed was just as fast as an early Nascent Soul cultivator.

Han Li's expression stirred at the sight of this. Fortunately, the white wolf puppet was specialized in speed, otherwise it might not have been able to lure it out.

With that thought, Han Li willed the wolf puppet to rush at full power without regard to the puppet's integrity. Afterwards, he flipped his hand to summon a ball of blue flame into his palm.

When the other two cultivators saw this, they prepared their magic treasures with serious expressions as they quietly waited next to the spell formations.

While the distance between the cultivators and the huge mountain appeared great, the white streak and the ball of fire-red mist crossed the distance in the blink of an eye. A stern expression then appeared on Han Li's face as the blue flame in his palm roiled, growing larger.

But when the white streak arrived near the spell formation and was just about to rush inside, the flame toad seemed to grow impatient. It loudly croaked and spat out a scarlet fireball while it was still over a hundred meters away.

When the fireball left its mouth, it wasn't even the size of a head, but when it reached ten meters out, it suddenly expanded to a gigantic size and overtook the white wolf puppet in a storm of raging flames. Soon, the puppet released a muffled explosion from within the flames.

The flames traveled incredibly quickly and not even a single trace of the puppet remained behind.

Han Li was shaken by the sight of this. The toad's demonic flames were at least an entire level beyond a cultivator's Nascent Flame. He grew doubtful about whether or not his Celestial Ice Flames would be able to restrain it, but he wasn't too worried. After all, he still had two even more ferocious methods to slay the beast: the Purple Apex Flames and the Aureate Sword Formation.

Not to mention that he would be able to slay the beast if he released all the Core Formation grade puppets he possessed, but in doing so, he would take a massive loss. The puppets would likely prove far more useful in other situations.

At that moment, the flame toad croaked with satisfaction at having killed the enemy that intruded upon its lair. Then in a blur of red mist, it turned around in a preparation to return.

In that moment, the three cultivators glanced at each other with dismay. Han Li felt particularly anxious. Since the flame toad's core was a matter of life and death for Nangong Wan, Han Li couldn't allow it to escape. A harsh expression on his face, his figure blurred and he shot towards it in a streak of azure light, his lone figure appearing at the edge of the spell formation.

Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiyng were stunned when they saw this, but they soon realized what Han Li planned.

Han Li's appearance had alarmed the flame toad just as he had intended. It quickly turned its head around and rigidly stared at the new enemy that had suddenly appeared close by. It remained motionless as it bewilderedly examined Han Li with one of its eyes.

Han Li remained silent and simply raised the ball of flame in his hand while he slapped his storage pouch with his free hand. Six balls of blue light dropped behind him, revealing themselves to be ten-meter-tall blue tortoise puppets.

Under Han Li's mental command, the shells of the six huge tortoise puppets began to faintly glow with icy Qi, quickly condensing foot-long icicles from their shells. Soon, their original meek appearance had turned extremely intimidating.

The flame toad seemed to sense Han Li's hostility and a cold glint appeared in its eyes. With a single breath, it released another ball of flame from its mouth.

When Han Li saw the fireball expand and shoot towards him with overbearing force, he remained silent and promptly raised the hand holding the ice flames, intending on testing the might of the flame toad's demonic flames. Suddenly an ember of blue ice drifted forward and met the oncoming giant ball of flame.

At that point, the flame toad's fireball had already expanded to twenty meters in diameter, but the ember of the Celestial Ice Flames was only several inches long. At a glance, they didn't appear comparable in the slightest, but upon contact, the flames and blue light ruptured in an astonishing display. A layer of dense blue ice covered the fireball, turning it into a ball of ice with a scarlet flame flickering at its center.

Han Li was somewhat shaken by the sight of this.

But when the Ancient Flame Toad saw that its fireball was restrained, it was enraged and threw open its mouth, releasing hundreds upon hundreds of fist-sized fireballs in a furious barrage.

Han Li pursed his lips and waved his hands. The six tortoise puppets lying behind him simultaneously shook their shells, launching the countless icicles that had condensed on their backs towards the barrage of fireballs.

Explosions filled the air. Ruptured icicles turned into an icy mist and fireballs imploded into large waves of flame, filling the air with roiling white Qi.

Han Li stared in front of him and narrowed his eyes. Soon it became clear that the fireballs were far stronger than the tortoise puppet's icicles. A moment later, the wave of fire began to overcome the icy mist.

When Han Li saw this, he muttered to himself for a moment before suddenly retreating in a blur. The six huge tortoise puppets closely followed after him.

At that moment, the wave of flames had completely overwhelmed the icy mist formed from the destroyed icicles and rushed forward without hesitation. But then, the six tortoise puppets shot out another barrage of icicles, blocking the wave of flames with a glacial mist.

Han Li closely stared at the Ancient Flame Toad that now appeared motionless and had its mouth closed. According to the information he had researched about Devilfall Valley, the Ancient Flame Toad should be able to recover its strength by drawing power from lava. In addition, with its immense skill in fire movement techniques, it's able to draw support from flames to travel over three kilometers in an instant.

Since the interior of the mountain was submerged in a sea of lava, it would easily escape once it entered into the ground. However, Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying didn't seem to mind this. After all, they were here to acquire the treasure left behind by the deceased ancient cultivator. Even if they couldn't slay the beast, it was all the same if they could acquire the treasures from the cultivator remains. But this was not the case for Han Li since he needed to acquire the demon beast's core for Nangong Wan. So long as the beast was lured into the spell formation and prevented from escaping, he would be able to wholeheartedly attack it. Making sure it couldn't escape was absolutely crucial.

When the Ancient Flame Toad saw that Han Li immediately retreated after fighting, it couldn't help but be puzzled. Since the beast wasn't very intelligent, it blurred forward without much thought and vigorously chased after Han Li.

Han Li was overjoyed upon seeing this.

After travelling a short distance, the flame toad became surrounded in a barrier of faint blue light. Several white lights flashed from the light barrier, releasing several ice dragons that coiled around the barrier, turning it icy and cold.

The flame toad was alarmed and unconsciously came to a stop as it wildly looked around it before releasing a menacing croak.

At the same time, light shined from either side of the light barrier and Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying simultaneously appeared. When the two saw that the flame toad was trapped by the spell formation, they began to unleash attacks without restraint.

Marquis Nanlong tossed the jade ring from his hand and Lu Weiying unleashed twin blue halberds that spiralled towards the flame toad. As expected, the spell formation's barrier didn't obstruct their treasures in the slightest and their attacks penetrated the ice barrier to strike the flame toad within.

The ice dragons surrounding the light barrier all flew up from it at once and attacked with brandished fangs. When Han Li saw this from a distance, he seized the opportunity to activate a formation flag in his hand, releasing a supplementary restriction in the formation to join together with his party's attacks.

When the flame toad saw this, it knew that things were far from good. It released a world-shaking howl and its body suddenly shrank before violently expanding, unleashing its life-saving ability.

As soon as the beast howled, foot long shields of scarlet light

appeared all over the flame toad's body. Afterwards, they stuck to its body, creating three impenetrable barriers of fiery light.

At that moment, the green jade ring, the ice dragons, and the blue twin halberds struck the fiery barrier simultaneously. Then a rumble shook the ice barrier and various colored lights collided, releasing a blinding burst of light.

But when the flame toad beast wildly roared again, a meter wide beam of light suddenly shot out from its mouth, striking a side of the ice barrier. The barrier groaned as it withstood the attack, but after only a moment, a large hole was easily melted through it.

Chapter 820: Beast Slaying

Red light brightly shined from the center of the ice barrier and the huge pillar of flame swept all around the Ancient Flame Toad. Regardless of whether it be the ice dragons or magic treasures, they were all forcefully knocked away. The Ancient Flame Toad's silhouette could be faintly seen within the pillar of light.

The column of flame quickly dispersed, and knowing that it was trapped, the Ancient Flame Toad took advantage of this opportunity to attempt an escape. It transformed into a ball of raging flames and shot itself towards the hole it just made in the barrier.

When Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying saw this, they hastily commanded their magic treasures to block the beast from escaping the spell formation, but they were too late.

In the blink of an eye, it arrived next to the ice barrier, but then a sharp whistle erupted from the distance as soon as the toad's front legs left the barrier. The toad saw a streak of black light appear and sweep towards it. Immediately after, it felt a burning and icy sensation from its leg, suddenly discovering that a large portion of it was missing.

The flame toad trembled for a moment before roaring with unbearable pain. Despite the beast's powerful abilities, it became overwhelmed by pain and promptly fell from the sky.

Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying rejoiced at the sight of this and immediately commanded their treasures to surround the flame toad and unleash a flurry of attacks.

The dark-green ring blurred several times and transformed into several hundred phantoms, revolving around the flame toad in an attempt to restrain it. As for the twin blue halberds, they turned into twenty-meter-long ice pythons in a flash of blue light before pouncing at the toad.

Showing itself to be a great beast deserving the fear from Master Cang Kun in the past, it showed no sign of being affected from having a missing limb and condensed a dense layer of small light shields around its body in preparation to receive the attacks.

The green ring phantoms were incapable of growing any closer to the flame toad's body and restraining it. They were only able to strike at the light shields to little effect. As for the two ice pythons, they were able to restrain the fire element light shields with their own ice attribute attacks. With each pounce, they smashed another light shield, but the number of shields seemed endless and the attacks had little effect.

But six beams of blue light soon joined the barrage of attacks, shattering the light shields with flashes of light. With a loud rumble, the ancient flame toad was overwhelmed despite its attempts to resist.

When Marquis Nanlong saw this, he looked to the side in surprise, spotting Han Li who had appeared nearby at an unknown time. Han Li had his arm raised, black Qi scattering from it. Behind him, there were six tortoise puppets that were each emitting bowl-thick beams of light that were striking the flame toad.

Han Li turned his eyes to glance at the flame toad's severed limb that fell outside the ice barrier. Although it was separated from its body, it still glowed with red light and floated near the ice barrier as if it still possessed spiritual power.

When Han Li saw this, his eyes betrayed a trace of astonishment.

A moment ago when Han Li saw that the flame toad was about to escape from the ice barrier, he unleashed the Yin Devil Execution in a moment of desperation. However, he didn't expect that the flame toad would still be so tenacious and fierce after it fell. It was still able to endure even under the attacks of two Nascent Soul cultivators and six of his puppets. It was no wonder why Master Cang Kun didn't dare to fight it while he was weakened.

Lu Weiying shouted, “Fellow Daoist Han, those fire-attribute shields surrounding his body are endless! I fear we will need you to restrain it with your ice-attribute ability or it will take too much time.” The light shields shattered into mist as soon as they were destroyed and after only a brief delay, the mist was sucked back into the toad’s body and the light shields reappeared. It was no wonder why Lu Weiying’s voice sounded apprehensive.

Even without Lu Weiying pointing this out, Han Li knew what had to be done. With a wave of his sleeve, over ten sparkling golden swords flew out from his sleeve. The swords revolved around him once before condensing into a three-meter-long sword that glistened with golden light and released a chilling aura.

Lu Weiying and Marquis Nanlong were puzzled upon seeing this. They had expected him to use that fearsome blue flame to deal with the flame toad, not unleash some flying swords.

With the huge sword materialized, Han Li expressionlessly waved his hand. In a flash of golden light, the huge sword flew in front of Han Li. Then with breath, he blew a sliver of blue flame onto the huge sword, covering it in a layer of raging blue flame.

He hesitated and then clapped his hands together before casting a spell seal, drawing out the Divine Devilbane Lightning from the sword. Thunder roared, raising countless thin arcs of flickering golden lightning from underneath the blue flames on the sword.

A cold glint appeared from Han Li’s eyes. As he pointed down at the flame toad, Han Li commanded, “Go.”

The air rumbled before the sword cleaved towards the flame toad in a streak of gold.

After a series of violent but ineffective attacks, Marquis Nanlong’s and Lu Weiying’s pressure had begun to weaken, granting the flame toad an opportunity to catch its breath. Fire-red spiritual light pulsing from its body, it began to wildly expand as if attempting to break through the barrier with another attack.

In the blink of an eye, the huge golden sword arrived at the flame toad's head, striking down as it left of thunder in its wake.

The flame toad stared at the golden sword dropping towards it with green eyes and sensed that the sword posed a massive threat to it. Unable to continue expanding its stomach, it strangely croaked and spat out a sparkling scarlet fireball to meet the golden sword's attack.

The fireball was only the size of a fist, but it was smooth and flickered with red light as if it were a huge pearl made of flame. As soon as it appeared, the air within the ice barrier became scorching hot.

"Demon core? It can't be! It isn't material." Han Li was initially frightened when he saw this, but was relieved to discover it wasn't a genuine demon core. After all, the flame toad should be too afraid of the consequences of actually using it.

Han Li continued the command, urging the golden sword to chop down at the fireball without any hesitation. With their enhanced sharpness and the might of their condensed numbers, Han Li believed the Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords should be able to slice through it despite how odd the fireball appeared.

With a bang, an astonishing scene occurred. As golden and fiery red light intertwined, the huge sword was only able to penetrate halfway through the fireball before the sword was forcefully blocked.

What appeared to be contempt appeared in the flame toad's eyes and it howled, rupturing the half-cut fireball.

A large expanse of the scarlet light spread out before instantly condensing into a six meter long red python. It leaped up and suddenly coiled around the huge sword, holding it in a rigid grip and restraining it.

Han Li was initially stunned, but he soon smirked. With his

hands in an incantation seal, he pointed to the huge sword and it wildly flashed with golden light. Soon, arcs of lightning began to appear on the surface of the sword and they all struck the light python that was wrapped around the sword, forcefully repelling it.

The huge sword took advantage of this opportunity to disappear with a tremble. A moment later, it made a reappearance above the Ancient Flame Toad and struck down as blue flames surged from the sword's surface.

Under the sword strike, the shields of light surrounding the flame toad were thoroughly frozen by the blue icy flames that surged from the huge sword and shattered.

In a single breath, over ten of the small shields were shattered and the huge sword continued downward, fiercely chopping down at the ancient toad's head.

The flame toad didn't expect the situation to take such a dire turn. In its last attack, it had unleashed a fireball that condensed its body's essence flame, and without the chance to catch its breath, the huge sword had shattered its defenses and was cutting towards its head. Fear filled its eyes.

Helpless, the flame toad could only open his mouth and launch its jet-black tongue from its mouth with a swoosh. At that same moment, it crouched on its hind legs, ready to leap.

If it were an ordinary treasure blade, the beast's action would've had an effect. After all, its tongue was incredibly durable and would be able to block common magic treasures without much effort. However, the Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords had been refined with Auric Essence and were far sharper than ordinary flying swords. As soon as the tongue touched the sword, it was cleaved through in a flash of golden light while the sword continued its descent.

Slash. Just as the Ancient Flame Toad leaped up three meters, its huge head spun as it flew off its body. Additionally, the light

shields surrounding the toad soon scattered into ashes.

When Lu Weiying saw this, he shouted with delight, “It’s done!”

Marquis Nanlong sighed and wore a smile. He then held his hands in an incantation gesture and walked towards the ice barrier.

“Wait a moment!” Han Li coldly shouted, stopping Marquis Nanlong from deactivating the ice barrier.

“What is it, Brother Han?” Marquis Nanlong wore a bewildered expression and unconsciously placed his hand on his storage pouch. Lu Weiying also glanced at Han Li, his face revealing a trace of vigilance.

Han Li turned a blind eye to their actions and calmly said, “It's only that I've yet to confirm that the flame toad is truly dead. Please don't be too hasty Brother Nanlong.”

“What? The flame toad is still alive?” Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying were shocked to hear this and hastily glanced down toward the ice barrier. They discovered that there was something strange about the flame toad. Its severed head and body were still glowing with light and floating in the air.

Chapter 821: Ancient Cultivator Remains

Two clouds of light extended from the separated pieces of the flame toad as they gradually merged together.

“Its body is immortal! The flame toad actually possesses such an ability?” Marquis Nanlong cried out in alarm. Lu Weiying appeared just as shocked.

“Immortal? There is nothing in this world that is truly immortal. Its vitality is simply more powerful than common demon beasts.”

Having read many records, Han Li knew what an “immortal body” was. After he severed the Ancient Flame Toad’s arm, Han Li had noticed how strange it appeared and felt that something was amiss. As a result, he had shouted for Marquis Nanlong to not dissolve the barrier, denying the flame toad an opportunity to restore itself and escape.

At that moment, Han Li wore a cold smile and pointed at the flame toad’s head once more. The huge sword spun around once in the air before splitting into two and chopping down at each of the toad’s body parts.

In a flicker of blue light, two bangs sounded out. The flame toad’s head and body were instantly covered in layers of frost. The scarlet lights was sealed within and were scattered by the flying sword’s strike. With the body destroyed, all the remained was a scarlet sphere, the Ancient Flame Toad’s demon core.

When Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying saw the demon core, they both felt slight temptation. After all, it was the demon core of an ancient beast with an immortal body. It was likely that it possessed some strange attributes. But when the two recalled the abilities Han Li had earlier displayed as well as his grand reputation, their temptation towards the core was completely stifled.

After all, they both clearly realized that with the abilities Han Li had displayed, their odds of victory against him would only be a coin toss. Additionally, it wasn't worth becoming hostile over the core of an unknown ancient beast. There would be far more opportunities for treasure in Devilfall Valley.

Although Han Li didn't possess any mind-reading techniques, he could guess what the other two were thinking. In the recent battle with the flame toad, neither of them had displayed their full might as if they were mostly relying on Han Li to slay the beast. As a result, Han Li had maintained a calm appearance, when in truth he grew even warier of the other two cultivators in case they were overcome with foolishness.

Now that he saw that they had regained their calm after a momentary change in expression, Han Li felt relieved. Although he wasn't afraid of a fight, it would be better to avoid any risks altogether.

Han Li waved his hand toward the ice barrier and summoned the demon core into his palm. Then with a clear ring, the two huge flying swords broke down into over ten small swords before disappearing into his sleeve.

Han Li lowered his head as he glanced at the fire-red demon core in his hand and released a long sigh. He had finally fulfilled one of his objectives in Devilfall Valley.

Marquis Nanlong smiled and said, "It is quite fortunate that we had Fellow Daoist Han here to slay the Ancient Flame Toad. Let's move into the nest and take a look. Surely Brother Han is also interested in taking a look at the treasures on the remains."

"Of course." Han Li put away the demon core and nodded.

Lu Weiying was happy to hear this and the three soon entered the mountain cave after putting away their spell formations.

To tell the truth, Han Li did think about secretly releasing

Silvermoon so that she could seize the treasures in the cave first. But given that the other two cultivators were extremely cunning, had paid particularly close attention to Han Li and possessed cultivation superior to his own, it was very likely they would've noticed he had released Silvermoon.

It was also worth mentioning that there was something odd about the cultivator remains. Since Han Li felt that there was something amiss, he decided to leave the matter be.

The three turned into three streaks of light, entering the cave in an instant.

The Marquis and Lu Weiying were surprised when they saw the lava, but soon ignored it as they glanced around, spotting the stone platform where the ancient cultivator remains laid with expressions of delight.

Marquis Nanlong's expression faded and he coolly said, "It seems this should be the remains that Master Cang Kun mentioned. Let's go there together."

Han Li and Lu Weiying raised no objections and they immediately moved towards the remains.

Floating over ten meters away from the stone platform, Han Li watched the remains with a trace of eager impatience.

The other two were also eager and showed little restraint as they immediately released their spiritual sense to search the remains for treasures. When Han Li saw this, he wore a mysterious smile and said nothing further. He had already discovered something odd about the ancient remains and decided it would be better for the two to experience it for themselves.

As a result, the two submerged the skeleton with their spiritual sense and green light burst from its robes. As a result, their spiritual sense was repelled before they were able to see anything, much to their alarm.

With a surprised expression, Wei Luying muttered, “Yi! There is something strange about those robes.”

Marquis Nanlong regained his calm and explained, “It is merely a gown made from the silk of a green silkworm. Ancient cultivators made robes from this material to prevent other cultivators from probing them with their spiritual sense. Although they’re rare in current times, it was a common item in ancient times.” He then swept his hand at the air and summoned the green robe into his hand.

As a result, the skeleton was revealed with a small black pouch wrapped around its waist.

“A storage pouch, as expected!” Lu Weiying shouted with joy. Marquis Nanlong also felt excitement and flung the green robes to the side as he stared at the black storage pouch with complete focus.

When Han Li heard the sound made by the azure robes dropping to the ground, his expression faintly changed for just a moment.

As the atmosphere grew tenser, Marquis Nanlong smiled to his two party members and suggested, “If you two are not opposed, will it be fine if I look through the storage pouch first?”

“Of course you can. Brother Nanlong please go ahead.” Han Li glanced at the storage pouch and replied with a smile. As for Lu Weiying, he hesitated for a moment before nodding.

Marquis Nanlong then stepped forward and carefully took the storage pouch into his hand. He swept through the general contents of it with his spiritual sense and his face became stiff.

When Lu Weiying saw this, he couldn’t help but say, “Brother Nanlong, what is inside? You may as well let us take a look.”

Marquis Nanlong nodded and flipped the storage pouch, immediately pouring out its contents in a flash of white light, producing a pile of items on the floor.

“What in the world is this!?” Lu Weiying shouted in alarm.

A majority of the items that appeared were scarlet lumps of metal that were scorching hot. There were also a few items that were particularly eye-catching: a white jade box, a small purple mirror, a small yellow sword, a set of green flying needles, and two black medicine bottles.

Han Li narrowed his eyes when he saw those items and his expression stirred.

Excluding the jade box and the medicine bottles, the rest of these items were rare ancient treasures without a doubt. As for the jade box and medicine bottles, they particularly piqued Han Li’s interest. Both the box and the bottles were refined from a material that blocked him from seeing into them with his spiritual sense.

Han Li frowned and said, “I’ve never seen those materials before, but they seem to only be half finished.”

After some thought, Marquis Nanlong mused, “Half-finished? That does seem to be the case. If I’ve guessed correctly, these iron chunks should be the legendary spirit ores, extraordinary materials that ancient cultivators used to refine ancient treasures. It is said that the method to refine them is quite peculiar, needing a large number of rare materials and worldly energy for their creation. This ancient cultivator must’ve wanted to refine a particularly fearsome fire-attribute treasure to have so many of them.”

“Spirit ores!” When Han Li heard the name, he immediately recalled that they were mentioned in an ancient record he had read. After a moment of thought, he remembered it to be a material used to refine rare ancient treasures, just as Marquis Nanlong had said.

When Lu Weiying heard this, he revealed a trace of excitement before turning to look at the rest of the treasures and eventually staring at the jade box and medicine bottle.

At that moment, Marquis Nanlong raised his hand and tossed the storage pouch over to Han Li.

Han Li unconsciously caught it and was surprised for a moment before realizing what Marquis Nanlong intended. He bluntly weighed it in his hand and searched through it before tossing it over to Lu Weiying.

Lu Weiying examined it and nodded when he confirmed there was no problem.

“Let’s each divide these treasures. How about we have each person select two items?” Mentioning the most crucial question of the matter before them, Marquis Nanlong wore a solemn expression.

Chapter 822: The Sevenflame Fan

Han Li's gaze flickered. Having seen Lu Weiying's expression, he asked, "Could it be that Brother Lu is suggesting another method to split the treasures?"

"If the jade box and medicine bottles were also ancient treasures, it wouldn't be a problem if we each got two items. But..."

"We still don't know what is inside the jade box or medicine bottles. Naturally, we should first take a look inside and split them in accordance to value." Marquis Nanlong interrupted him and said something that appeared fair.

Lu Weiying frowned after he heard this, but he soon nodded and said, "I also find those terms agreeable. How about you, Fellow Daoist Han?"

"I have no objections. Let's do that then." Han Li replied without any further thought.

"Fellow Daoist Han speaks quite frankly. I'll be taking a look at what is inside." Appearing quite satisfied at Han Li's response, Marquis Nanlong swept his hand and summoned the white box into his grasp. With a slap from his other hand, he attempted to open the box.

White light shined the moment the box opened and a layer of white light appeared from it, repelling Marquis Nanlong's hand. "Yi! The box is under a restriction." After muttering to himself for a moment, golden light flashed from his hand and he grabbed the box once more.

The white light blocked him once more and intertwined with the light from Marquis Nanlong's hand, but after a short moment, the golden light sparked and he managed to forcefully open the box before the white light completely disappeared. Han Li was blinded for a moment before clearly seeing a faintly yellow jade slip within

the box.

Lu Weiying wore an odd expression and Marquis Nanlong hesitated for a moment before placing the jade slip on his forehead. After sweeping through the contents of the jade slip in an instant, he wore an odd expression.

“Fellow Daoists, have a look at it!” Preventing the others from growing suspicious of him, Marquis Nanlong quickly tossed it over to Han Li. Han Li caught the jade slip and placed it against his forehead. A frown unconsciously appeared on his face a moment later and he gave the jade slip to Lu Weiying, who also quickly read through it.

Before Lu Weiying even finished reading through it, he muttered, “The Sevenflame Fan? I’ve never heard of this ancient treasure. Is it powerful?”

Marquis Nanlong mused and said, “I’m not sure, but given the difficult refinement method listed in the jade slip and the fact that it requires spirit ore, it should be quite formidable.”

Lu Weiying shook his head and returned the jade slip to Marquis Nanlong. “Even if it is powerful, it is no use. Although it details the refinement method, it requires over eighty-one fire attribute spirit materials with just as many supplementary materials. Among these are items that were long extinct from this world. The jade slip is now of little value and can only be used for research.”

Marquis Nanlong smiled and carelessly slipped the jade slip back into the box.

Just as Han Li deemed the jade slip to be useless, he suddenly heard Silvermoon’s delighted voice in his head, “The Sevenflame Fan? Master, does that jade slip truly contain the method to refine it?”

Han Li’s expression stirred and he replied, “That’s right. Do you know of it?”

Silvermoon's voice trembled and she excitedly said, "Master, if I remember correctly, the Sevenflame Fan is a Divine Spirit Treasure, but its ranking was rather low amongst Divine Spirit Treasures, ranked in the teens."

"Divine Spirit Treasure!" When Han Li heard this, he couldn't help but speak with surprise.

Before Han Li could continue, the Monarch of Soul Divergence also spoke with excitement, "What? A Divine Spirit Treasure? You must acquire the jade slip by all means. I wished to research Divine Spirit Treasures in the past, but their refinement methods are quite difficult to come by."

Silvermoon's tone turned harsh and she coldly said, "Old eccentric, what are you doing running your mouth?"

The Monarch of Soul Divergence chuckled and casually said, "Demon fox, you're still holding the grudge from before? I only thought to do a bit of research on you because I've never heard of a tool spirit that was intelligent. Didn't your master accept as well?"

"You..."

Han Li coldly said, "Enough, Silvermoon! The matter has already passed, don't cling onto it. However, it does come as a surprise that Senior knows of Divine Spirit Treasures. However, now isn't the time to speak in detail. Let's put it off for later." Han Li then turned his gaze to the jade box and watched Marquis Nanlong open both of the black medicine bottles.

Silvermoon tactfully dropped the matter. Although she still felt unhappy towards the Monarch of Soul Divergence, she was still under the control of Han Li. With only a few simple words, he could order her to remain silent.

When Marquis Nanlong opened a black medicine bottle, Han Li felt his mind shake when he smelled the comforting fragrance that emerged.

Marquis Nanlong took out a glistening jade-green medicine pill from the bottle and held it in his palm. He hesitantly said, “This isn’t a common type of ancient medicine pill. While I’m not sure what it is, it shouldn’t be something harmful. I’ll have to identify it with records.”

With an entranced gaze, Lu Weiying slowly said, “How many pills are in the bottle?”

Marquis Nanlong faced Han Li and Lu Weiying and showed them the empty medicine bottle. “There is only the one pill, but it seems to be incredibly valuable.”

“Let’s look at the other medicine bottle!” Lu Weiying impatiently said.

Marquis Nanlong nodded and sealed the medicine pill in his hand up in the bottle before opening the other bottle to reveal an identical green medicine pill. As a result, the Marquis and the old man exchanged a glance of apprehension.

Han Li smiled and calmly asked, “It seems this harvest has been quite good. There are three ancient treasures, two unknown medicine pills, and the refinement method for an ancient treasure. How do you think we should divide it?”

Marquis Nanlong looked at the two medicine bottles in his hand and calmly said, “Although we don’t know what these spirit pills are, Fellow Daoist Han should know that we entered the valley in order to look for spiritual medicines. Fellow Daoist Lu and I plan on splitting them between us as a share of the treasure. Since this is the case, Fellow Daoist Han can have first pick of the other ancient treasures. We hope you don’t have any problem with this.”

When Han Li heard this, he frowned and glanced at the several treasures on the ground.

Han Li stroked his chin and shook his head, “You two Fellow Daoists should know the value of those ancient pills without me

saying. To tell the truth, I might rather have one of those pills and increase my cultivation than take an ancient treasure.”

When the other two heard Han Li, their expressions grew tense. Marquis Nanlong’s expression stirred for a moment before forcing a smile, “Fellow Daoist Han’s age is still young. There should be no need to fight against two people at the end of their lifespans for the two medicine pills. In only a short time, you have entered the early Nascent Soul stage. It should be quite easy for you to reach the tallest heights of cultivation.”

Han Li softly said, “My age and wanting the medicine pill are two different matters. With such an opportunity before me, it is only natural for me to want to seize it with all my might. However, I am willing to renounce all the other treasures for those two medicine pills. To tell the truth, I have no lack of ordinary ancient treasures.”

Lu Weiying grew nervous at Han Li’s determined display and he gritted his teeth, saying, “Fellow Daoist Han must be joking. How could we possibly give up the two medicine pills? How about this, so long as Brother Han relinquishes his claim on the two medicine pills, we’ll give him priority on picking the entire his share of treasures. Brother Nanlong, what do you think?”

When Marquis Nanlong heard this, he grimaced but soon wore a bitter smile and said, “So long as he renounces his claim on the spirit pills, let’s have Fellow Daoist Han have first pick on two treasures.”

A trace of reluctant appeared on Marquis Nanlong’s face. After all, most of his ancient treasures had been destroyed when the Ghost Spirit Sect besieged him in the Moulan Plains. With so many ancient treasures before him, he felt unwilling to let them go. However, he knew those ancient spirit pills were far more valuable to him.

At that moment, Han Li revealed a trace of hesitation on his face

as if tempted by their proposal.

When Lu Weiyng saw this, he hastily took the opportunity to add on, “Fellow Daoist Han’s lifespan is still very long. There will be time to look for other pills later. In comparison, you should find those ancient treasures to be useful to you now. Having another ancient treasure in your possession will be sure to save your life in any future battles.”

Han Li couldn’t help but smile and said, “It seems that unless I give up on the spirit pills, it will be hard to distribute the treasures. Fine, since you two were so sincere, I will agree to give the spirit pills to you. I also don’t need two ancient treasures, only the mirror. Also, give the treasure refinement method and spirit ore over to me. I am quite interested in tool refinement.” Han Li reached out with his hand and summoned the purple mirror into his hand.

The two glanced at each other for a moment and promptly responded, “Then let’s do as you say, Brother Han.”

Although they felt puzzled that Han Li would want that instead of an ancient treasure, they were disinclined to further investigate the matter since they already had the ancient pills in hand.

When Han Li heard their responses, he nodded with a calm expression and put the mirror away in a flash of light. Soon, he flung his sleeve and swept up the jade box and the crafting materials in a cloud of green light, causing them to disappear from sight.

Chapter 823: Blood Curse Gate

Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying each took a medicine bottle and carefully placed them into their storage pouches. Afterwards, the three glanced at the two remaining ancient treasures. It appeared that splitting them would be quite awkward.

As the Marquis and the old man hesitated over the matter, Han Li blinked and smiled. “How about this? I am not lacking in ancient treasures, so if you two have enough spirit stones, I will let you two have them at the appropriate cost.”

“We will respectfully accept Han Li’s modest proposal. I’ve brought quite a number of spirit stones.” Lu Weiying promptly agreed with joy. After all, ancient treasures were something that couldn’t be bought.

Marquis Nanlong particularly lacked ancient treasures and he happily agreed to Han Li’s proposal. They promptly gathered together nearly all the spirit stones in their possession and handed them over to Han Li, resulting in a satisfactory conclusion for all parties involved.

When Han Li saw that they had taken the two remaining ancient treasures, he casually waved his hand and summoned the azure silkworm robe into his hand before putting it away.

The other two watched this with a blank expression, but since Han Li had given the two ancient treasures over to them, they left the matter alone. Although the robe was rare, there weren’t many uses for it.

With the treasures now divided amongst them, they harvested the grass that was growing at the side of the lava, resulting in several stalks per person.

The spirit grass wasn’t a common item since it was able to grow under such harsh conditions. It was revealed to be the flame-

attribute Golden Yang Grass, a top grade material used for refining flame-attribute spirit pills.

Without anything else there to capture their interest, the three gathered back together on the stone platform and discussed their plans moving forward.

Han Li spoke first with a calm tone, “Since the treasure has been acquired, I am planning on leaving the valley depths and returning the way I came. Will you be returning with me?”

Marquis Nanlong chuckled and said, “Fellow Daoist Han must be joking. Brother Lu and I have only just managed to enter the valley with great difficulty. We can’t return so soon. Why are you so impatient to leave?”

With a casual tone, Han Li answered, “It’s nothing surprising. I’ve already made a profit and I don’t want to take any further risks. The path of cultivation ahead of me is a long one. I have no interest in staying in an area as dangerous as this one and risk cutting that path short.”

Lu Weiying wore a beaming smile and said, “Hehe! I didn’t think that Fellow Daoist Han was so aware of his future path. It is a pity we won’t be returning together. Fellow Daoist Han can go ahead and leave the valley first.”

Wearing an odd expression, Han Li asked, “Leave alone? If I leave with the Yin Yang Ring, how will you two get past the Greatnorth Essence Lights?”

Marquis Nanlong quickly replied, “Brother Han doesn’t need to worry. We’ve already considered it. Master Cang Kun found a transportation formation in the valley depths during his time here. However, it is quite a distance away from here so it would be faster for you to return the way you came. I would’ve told you about it previously if it were closer.”

Han Li’s expression blanched for a moment but he soon nodded

and said, “So it was like that. Then I must bid you farewell. I hope you two have a rich harvest.”

When Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying heard Han Li bid them farewell, they hastily replied.

“Many thanks for your kind words, Fellow Daoist Han.”

“Please go ahead.”

Han Li smiled and took a glance at the crystalline bones before flying out in a streak of azure light, disappearing in the blink of an eye.

When Lu Weiying saw that Han Li had disappeared from sight, his smile vanished. As for Marquis Nanlong, he expressionlessly slapped his storage pouch and released several small golden birds, the Eternal Flight Orioles that he had nurtured. They flew out of the cave and disappeared in streaks of light.

Marquis Nanlong closed his eyes as if sensing something. When Lu Weiying saw this, he raised his brow, but remained silent as he waited.

After an unknown amount of time had passed, Marquis Nanlong’s eyes stirred and he opened them while saying, “Han Li has truly left. At the very least, he isn’t anywhere near us. The Eternal Flight Orioles have observed an area of five kilometers around us and they have found no trace of him.”

Lu Weiying frowned and asked, “Didn’t you say that his spiritual sense is particularly powerful? Couldn’t he be hiding from you?”

Marquis Nanlong stroked his chin and wore an odd expression as he said, “Relax. If he has truly concealed himself, then he definitely wouldn’t be able to hide from me. However, I can’t tell you the reason why I know this.”

Lu Weiying felt somewhat skeptical of Marquis Nanlong’s confidence, but after a time more of thought, he clutched his hands in a spell incantation and cast spell seals all around him,

forming a small barrier of light around them.

Marquis Nanlong smiled, but a trace of disapproval was betrayed from his face.

With the barrier laid down, Lu Weiyng finally said, “It isn’t ever wrong to be too careful. We’ve never been able to see through Fellow Daoist Han, Brother Nanlong. He truly gives us a sense of mystery. And don’t you think there was something strange about the way he glanced at the skeleton?”

Marquis Nanlong shook his head and said, “Brother Lu, you are too suspicious. Although that Youngster Han possesses vast abilities, he couldn’t possibly know the secret behind the bones. It should only be an incidental action. After all, the skeleton looked quite unordinary. It should be natural to want to take a look at it.”

After some more thought, Lu Weiyng thoughtfully said, “Regardless of whether he has seen through it, it is true that he didn’t wish to stay here with us. Perhaps he feels that with his abilities, he would be able to search for treasures alone in the valley. Then so long as he doesn’t get in our way, all we can do is be more careful, considering that he might not have left the valley. Since too much time has passed, we should act quickly.”

Marquis Nanlong sighed and said, “According to the records left behind by Master Cang Kun, the ancient cultivator skeleton is the key to dissolving the Blood Curse Gate. Since the gate is sealed with such formidable restrictions, it is obviously no small matter. During times of antiquity, the Blood Curse Gate was a storage of fantastical treasures. The diseased cultivator’s transparent bones were a sign that they had opened the gate once before. Master Cang Kun’s inability to acquire them is a great convenience to us.”

Lu Weiyng continued, “However, the treasures we’ve acquired shouldn’t be nearly as valuable as those stored behind the Blood Curse Gate. Alright, let’s set off. Although the Blood Curse Gate isn’t far away, the quicker we acquire the treasures, the better.”

“Your words are reasonable. Let us set off. I am looking forward to seeing the items behind the Blood Curse Gate. Were it not for Master Cang Kun spotting the cultivator remains near the Blood Curse Gate, we would’ve had no chance of opening it. Those who placed the gate under the restrictions in the past can’t have been too far away from it. However, it is odd as to how they died. There should be another story of what happened to those ancient cultivators.”

“I don’t have any interest in what happened to them in the past. Let us go, Brother Nanlong.”

Soon, the two shot out of the passageway and were flying toward some unknown passage in the giant mountain.

At that moment, Han Li was fifty kilometers away and on the route back to the outer valley.

Silvermoon’s puzzled voice asked from the back of his mind, “Master, you’re truly leaving? Those two are clearly concealing something from you. There is something strange about that skeleton.”

Han Li replied, “Of course I know this. It most likely has something to do with other treasures. Although I am tempted, I have something more important to attend to, the Spirit Kindle Fruit. And there are still other treasures in the valley I have use for. Since we’ve lagged too far behind the Ghost Spirit Sect, I cannot afford to be drawn into Marquis Nanlong’s and Lu Weiying’s scheme.”

“So it turned out that there truly are no other treasures in Devilfall Valley that hold as much value to Master as the Spirit Kindle Fruit. However, why did Master seize the azure silkworm gown at the very end? I don’t believe that Master truly sought the item.”

Han Li grinned upon hearing this. “Hehe! Well, I’m sure that those two old men also had no idea why I took it.”

Silvermoon puzzledly asked, “Master, what do you mean?”

Han Li didn’t immediately reply. Instead, he extended his hand and slapped his storage pouch. In a flash of green light, a silk robe appeared in his hand. With a crackle, Han Li easily tore open the corner of the robe.

Silvermoon exclaimed at the sight of this. Han Li’s tear had revealed a small fabric of sorts that was written on with a primitive crudeness. Han Li then put away the azure robe and began to closely examine the fabric.

As Han Li looked at the item, Silvermoon was able to catch sight of it as well. After a glance, she cried out, “This is a map, likely of Devilfall Valley!”

Remaining silent, Han Li stared at a few large symbols on the map and couldn’t help but narrow his eyes.

Chapter 824: Deep Pool

While studying the crude map, Han Li saw that it appeared roughly similar to Devilfall Valley. However, there were a few particular areas on the map that were thoroughly marked, detailing those sections of the valley as well as the nearby topography of the marked locations.

Han Li was able to locate his own position with regards to the areas that were marked, but he was far too distant from them and was unsure of the dangers that lay ahead.

Han Li muttered to himself for a moment before putting away the map and shaking his head. He knew that the map was certain to contain some important secrets, but he couldn't afford any distractions before he acquired the Spirit Kindle Fruit; it was of tantamount importance. Silvermoon seemed to guess what Han Li was thinking and said little further.

Han Li flipped his hand and took out the jade box he just acquired before placing it inside the bamboo tube he wore on his back. Han Li then said with an indifferent tone, "Many materials required to craft the Sevenflame Fan should've gone extinct or disappeared long ago. Perhaps Senior can find some substitutions that can be acquired in the current cultivation world with his material equivalence knowledge. If I end up truly able to refine this treasure, I will hold you in the highest esteem."

After a time of silence, the Monarch of Soul Divergence coldly laughed and answered, "Youngster, do you think I'm an idiot? Although I am quite interested in the Divine Spirit Treasure, I'm not about to research the refinement method without a reason. Don't tell me you think I'm going to do that for some simple praise."

Han Li didn't appear surprised. Instead, he coldly replied, "Divine Spirit Treasures aren't easily refined. Although I do know

that you are knowledgeable of material equivalence, I am not confident whether or not you can truly do this. But if you do succeed, I will spare no effort to fulfill any of your requests. Will that satisfy you?"

When he heard this, the Monarch of Soul Divergence paused before coldly snorting. With an arrogant tone, he said, "In the past, I had found a few materials for Divine Spirit Treasures in some ancient cultivator ruins and learned of these world-defying treasures. As these treasures were something held in reverence by ancient cultivators, I grew quite curious and took particular note of them. Unfortunately, there was too little information on Divine Spirit Treasures and I wasn't able to make any progress on them. Now that I've become neither human nor ghost, I don't wish to spend my remaining years of life on this task only for it to be in vain. Moreover, I will only be looking for a few substitute materials. I won't be doing something as difficult as creating a new method to refine them. And when I am done, don't forget that I will have a demand for you."

"Fine. I agree." Han Li agreed with a beaming smile.

Since he had the genius who founded the Great Development Arts at his disposal, Han Li didn't wish to waste this opportunity. Although he already possessed another Divine Spirit Treasure, the Heavenvoid Cauldron, he didn't know when he would be able to use it. Besides, Divine Spirit Treasures were heaven-defying existences; so the more, the better.

The Monarch of Soul Divergence was silent afterwards, perhaps already examining the refinement method inside the jade box.

With that matter concluded, the light surrounding Han Li's body shined brightly and he flew forward at an even greater speed.

...

In the mountain where the Purple-lined Scorpions' nest was located, Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying were heading

underground inside an unfamiliar tunnel. It was dark to the point that they were only able to see ten meters ahead of them despite their vast cultivation.

As Lu Weiying followed three meters behind Marquis Nanlong, he slowly said, “Brother Nanlong, I didn’t think that there would actually be a place so cold and damp inside the lava territory. I’ve now grown even more convinced that the Blood Curse Gate is here.”

Marquis Nanlong smiled and said, “So it turned out that Brother Lu was doubtful about it? You should know that the Blood Curse Gate wasn’t even mentioned in the records left behind by Master Cang Kun, or else the Ghost Spirit Sect would definitely be here. The Blood Curse Gate was a secret that was only passed down through his descendants.”

With narrowed eyes, Lu Weiying smiled and said, “But if it weren’t for the fact you needed the power of two Nascent Soul cultivators to open the Blood Curse gate, you might not have needed to take me along.”

With a chuckle, Marquis Nanlong casually said, “Brother Lu must be joking. We’ve been friends for many years. With such profit to be gained, it is only natural for me to ask you to come along. Why else would I have concealed this matter from that Youngster Han?”

Having heard this, Lu Weiying tactfully dropped the matter and said, “Then I must thank you for your kindness, Brother Nanlong.”

With only two people searching for treasures, it was prudent to be somewhat wary of the other party member. By letting Marquis Nanlong know that he had a precaution up his sleeve, there shouldn’t be any falling out along the way. He especially didn’t wish to fight in such unfamiliar territory.

Marquis Nanlong knew what Lu Weiying was doing and he sneered in his mind while maintaining a calm expression.

The two remained silent as they continued down the passageway and eventually saw a weak light ahead of them. The two rejoiced and immediately quickened their steps, arriving inside a large cave.

The cave was over three hundred meters wide and had meter-long stalactites sparkling with white light hanging from the ceiling. But the most eye-catching thing was the thirty-meter-wide dark-green pool at the center of the cave. Apart from its emerald color, there didn't seem to be anything exceptional about it.

Discovering that there were no restrictions that existed nearby, Lu Weiying couldn't help but ask, "The Blood Curse Gate is really here?"

Seeing that Lu Weiying had already changed his stance despite his previous confidence in the existence of the gate, Marquis Nanlong shot a glance at him before revealing a mysterious smile and saying, "It's here without a doubt. But since the Blood Curse Gate was such an important area, Master Cang Kun hid the area by concealing the restrictions before he left." He then turned his gaze to the pool at the center of the cave. Lu Weiying blankly turned toward it and suddenly began to examine the pool with a sudden realization.

At that moment, Marquis Nanlong waved his sleeve and took out a small blue flag. Plop. The flag flew out of his hand and disappeared into the pool without a trace. Afterwards, he formed a hand incantation and began to mutter.

The calm surface of the pool suddenly began to ripple and slowly revolve. The rotations grew in size and intensity until a large whirlpool appeared at its center, hums emitting from it.

"A Watersplit Flag? I didn't think that Brother Nanlong would have such a rare treasure." Lu Weiying said with astonishment.

Marquis Nanlong shook his head and said, "It's nothing. Apart from splitting the water, it has no other abilities." He then softly

yelled as he raised his hands, striking at the whirlpool with two spell seals. The pool grew ten meters wide before creating a passage before them.

Without uttering another word, Marquis Nanlong flew directly into the water. Lu Weiying paused for a second before quickly following suit.

A moment later, Lu Weiying's expression paled. The pool wasn't simply deep; it was profoundly deep. He had already flown a kilometer downward and there was still no end in sight. As he glanced above to look at the top of the pool, he saw a speck of light and faintly felt apprehension and pressure weighing down on him.

Fortunately, after travelling over three hundred kilometers more, he saw that Marquis Nanlong suddenly slowed down. They had finally reached the bottom of the pool. Lu Weiying felt some relief and floated down, withdrawing the light that surrounded him.

The pool's bottom was a round area that was over thirty meters wide, appearing even larger than the pool's surface. The Watersplit Flag was inserted in the middle of the stone floor and glowing with blue light. Surrounding it was a tall, dark-green wall of water that stretched all the way up to the pool's surface.

Lu Weiying glanced at his surroundings and frowned, saying, "The Blood Curse Gate is exceptionally well hidden. No one would think to go a kilometer deep into the pool. However, it is baffling how Master Cang Kun managed to find this."

"This... As a person who possessed an outstanding spiritual sense, it is likely Master Cang Kun managed to directly sink his spiritual sense deep into the pool." Marquis Nanlong spoke with a tone of doubt. As he hadn't considered the matter before, he felt somewhat at a loss.

"That is certainly possible," Lu Weiying stroked his chin but his gaze flickered.

Marquis Nanlong muttered to himself for a moment before shaking his head and tossing the matter to the back of his mind. He then slapped his storage pouch and summoned a white jade pendant into his hand. He released the pendant into the air and it began to revolve around the two of them.

Marquis Nanlong raised his hands and formed an incantation seal, launching streaks of various colored spell seals onto the pendant. The pendant cleanly absorbed them and soon shined with a blinding white light. It stopped in front of the barrier of water before screaming with phoenix cries.

Marquis Nanlong raised his hand and pointed to the jade pendant. As it trembled, a white mist of light sprayed out in front of it.

A strange scene occurred as the mist of white light passed through the water barrier and distorted the image as if ripping through a painting. As the light shattered, a ten-meter-tall arched stone gate appeared in its place with crimson light sparkling on the surface.

A huge horned ghost head was carved onto the top of the stone gate, taking up most of the gate's surface. It appeared true to life and malevolent.

“This is the Blood Curse Gate?” Lu Weiying stroked his chin as he looked at it. For some reason, he suddenly felt a wave of apprehension upon seeing the gate.

Chapter 825: Spirit Ether Garden

Marquis Nanlong glanced at the stone gate with a pensive expression before letting out a long sigh, “That’s right. This is the Blood Curse Gate.”

Lu Weiying looked at it for a moment and worriedly asked, “The blood Qi on the gate seems to possess a strong devilish nature. Will there be any problems with it?”

Marquis Nanlong turned to look at Lu Weiying and said, “The gate was sealed by ancient cultivators by using essence blood. Naturally, it will differ from common restrictions. What? Does Brother Lu want to turn back?”

Lu Weiying shook his head and solemnly said, “Turn back? Since we’ve already arrived, how could I do something so foolish? But we still be careful just in case.”

After a moment of thought, Marquis Nanlong’s expression relaxed and he said, “That is reasonable. The gate does give one a sense of discomfort. How about this? First we’ll lay down several restrictions outside the gate. If anything strange occurs, we’ll be able to escape without a problem.”

“Good, then let’s do that.” Lu Weiying promptly nodded.

As a result, Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying took out several spell formation setup tools and began to place them at the bottom of the pool.

As Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying made their preparations for the Blood Curse Gate, there were a group of people slowly travelling up a huge black stone mountain in another area of the valley. They were headed by a middle-aged cultivator with a stern face while an azure-robed old man stood by his side. They were Wang Tiansheng, Wang Tiansheng, and Wei Wuya. As for Wang Tiangu, he was following three meters behind them. In addition to

the three of them, there were four Ghost Spirit Sect Core Formation cultivators closely following behind them.

Wang Tiangu glanced at the red mist not far above him and muttered, “This wicked land is truly evil. Even remote areas have a restriction placed every fifty kilometers. You can’t fly for more than ten meters at a time.”

Wang Tiansheng calmly replied, “The more constrained the area, the more it illustrates we’re in the right place. If we were the ancient cultivators, we would’ve placed restrictions most likely to dissuade other cultivators from treading here. After all, it would take at least a day by foot to travel through here.”

Wang Tiangu revealed an expression of helplessness and said with a chuckle, “Having spent so much effort on this, I certainly hope we didn’t find the wrong place. We’ve already lost three disciples on the way here.”

At that moment, Wei Wuya was looking at the mountain top and expressionlessly said, “After we entered the valley depths, we walked for three days. Don’t tell me that we will have to walk for several more days before we arrive.”

Wang Tiansheng didn’t dare to neglect Wei Wuya and slowly said, “Be at ease, Fellow Daoist Wei. We’ll be there once we pass through this mountain. Once this is done, our Ghost Spirit Sect will be the greatest Devil Dao Sect in the Heavenly South and Fellow Daoist Wei will breakthrough to Deity Transformation Stage. It is only a matter of time.”

Wei Wuya grew silent for a moment before he derisively snorted, “To tell the truth, I don’t put much stock in the legends of the Spirit Ether Garden. They were most likely false rumors spread by ancient cultivators. If there was such a space that linked the Spirit World to ours, it should’ve already been found. How could it have been kept secret until now?”

Wang Tiansheng didn’t reveal any surprise and instead curiously

asked, “Since Brother Wei didn’t believe it, why did he immediately accept our invitation?”

Without further thought, Wei Wuya bluntly said, “Fellow Daoist Wang seemed to mobilize half of the elites of his sect for this matter. It seems that you have some confidence in your trip to Devilfall Valley. Even if you don’t find the Spirit Ether Garden, you should still find a secret ancient cultivator area. Since I knew this, I agreed to allow you to draw support from my reputation and suppress the other cultivators in the valley. The share of treasures you give to me should be quite generous.”

The Ghost Spirit Sect roared with laughter and said, “Brother Wei is quite sharp! However, this is something you misunderstood. My sect has spent such efforts in order to truly travel to the Spirit Ether Garden. The Spirit Ether Garden isn’t some false rumor. Rather, Devilfall Valley was created by ancient cultivators for the sole purpose of protecting the Spirit Ether Garden. Once we pass this mountain, it will only take six hours before you can personally see it with your own eyes. When we open the way to the pocket dimension it is located in, we will require much of Fellow Daoist Wei’s power.”

When Wu Weiya heard this, both excitement and surprise appeared on his face. “If you say this with such certainty, you must’ve acquired evidence that the Spirit Ether Garden exists.”

“That’s right. Our sect has a certain confidence that the Spirit Ether Garden exists. As for the evidence, Fellow Daoist Wei will know when he gets there.” Once the black-robed middle-aged man finished speaking, he wore a mysterious expression. Although he was only an early Nascent Soul cultivator, his confident disposition gave Wei Wuya a feeling of unease.

Wei Wuya nodded and his expression returned to normal, but he coldly smiled in his mind. No matter how extravagant the Ghost Spirit Sect Master’s words may be, unless he personally saw the Spirit Ether Garden, he would remain completely skeptical. Of

course, he wouldn't say these words directly to him. He simply smiled and changed the subject, saying, "After your sect's Elder Zhong entered the valley, he had his own matters to attend to. Now that such a long time has passed, do you think you could tell me about his whereabouts? He can't be like the other cultivators. Surely your sect didn't send a mid Nascent Soul elder to Devilfall Valley on a trip of leisure?"

Wang Tiansheng didn't appear to mind his question and casually replied, "Brother Wei must be joking. I won't conceal this from you. Elder Zhong has been sent to collect treasures from another secret area of the valley. Of course, while the treasure may be precious, it isn't nearly as important as the Spirit Ether Garden."

When Wei Wuya heard this, he dryly laughed and declined from asking further about the matter. As a result, the party of cultivators continued on their way in silence.

...

In an expanse of rough and uneven stone, there were seven Ghost Spirit Sect disciples scattered around and continuously searching for something. The Ghost Spirit Sect Elder Zhong was floating at the area's center without making the slightest movement.

Although his spiritual sense was able to easily envelop the wilderness for tens of kilometers around him, he needed to find a particular mark, something that could only be found with deliberate and meticulous effort. As a result, he stifled his impatience and sent the disciples under his command to slowly sift through the rocks.

...

In another area of the valley, peals of thunder suddenly echoed from a ravine covered in rainbow light. Afterwards, following a storm of lightning and thunder, a group of cultivators emerged from the rainbow light.

The ones leading them were a green-robed old man and an old Daoist. Although the two didn't appear to have suffered any injuries, they each had a miserable appearance and ashen complexions. They were Daoist Heavencrystal and Dongmen Tu, the grand elder of the Controlling Spirit Sect.

The other five green-robed cultivators walked behind them with similarly ruined robes and pale complexions as if they had suffered through quite a bit of pain. As for the two fiendish puppets, they appeared entirely unchanged without even the slightest damage.

After flying a hundred meters away, Dongmen Tu turned around to glance at the ravine behind him before turning to look at the two fiendish puppets. "We've finally broken through the barrier and entered the valley depths. I didn't think that Fellow Daoist Heavencrystal's two puppets would rival the power of a cultivator at the peak of early Nascent Soul stage. How truly envious!"

Having hearing this, Daoist Heavencrystal said, "The puppets are merely puppets. No matter how powerful they may be, how could they compare to your subordinates. With their elemental techniques, I'm sure they would be able to contend against even a late Nascent Soul stage cultivator."

Daoist Heavencrystal was clearly wary of Dongmen Tu. As soon as they left the ravine, he kept his distance from him. His puppets stood behind him as they both began to flicker with various colored light.

When Dongmen Tu saw this, his face grew sullen and he soon sighed. With a wry smile he said, "Isn't Fellow Daoist Heavencrystal overly wary of me? We've spent the last two days in a united effort to break through the formations. Fellow Daoist shouldn't have anything against me. Wouldn't it be better to reconsider joining hands and looking for treasure together? It'll be far safer than heading out alone."

"Brother Dongmen, I have nothing against you. It is just that I

am fond of being alone. Please don't suggest joining hands again. Since we've already entered the valley depths, we should part ways." Daoist Heavencrystal chuckled and saluted Dongmen Tu. However, he didn't depart and was instead staring at him with caution.

When Dongmen Tu saw this, he frowned for a moment before smiling. "Since Fellow Daoist Heavencrystal is unwilling, I won't force you. We will split up here. I hope you have a large harvest."

"Hehe! Then I wish you luck as well." Daoist Heavencrystal's expression relaxed and he headed away with his puppets following after him. Dongmen Tu watched him as he departed into the distance and his face grew sullen.

Dongmen Tu sighed with annoyance. "That old ghost is truly too cautious. It's been two days and he hasn't let his guard down. With those two puppets, searching the valley depths would be far safer." He then glanced around and slapped his spirit beast pouch. With a gust of wind, a sparkling silver bat appeared in front of him.

Dongmen Tu raised his hand and tossed a jet-black medicine pill into the mouth of the silver bat. The bat then flew once in the air before shooting off into the sky.

When Dongmen Tu saw this, he hastily called out to the five cultivators behind him and led the way. In the blink of an eye, the party disappeared from sight.

Chapter 826: Blood Curse Restriction

Marquis Nanlong stuck the final formation flag down at the corner of the pond. He wryly smiled, slapping his hands together, and said, “How is it? Are you done with your preparations? With these spell formations placed down, even if a massive problem occurs, we’ll be able to deal with it. Anything further would be a waste of time.”

Lu Weiying chuckled and said, “I would rather waste a bit more time than encounter any surprises. If there are truly only secret treasures hidden behind the gate, then that will be for the best. But if there is something else there, a little more preparation will be better. Although I covet ancient treasures greatly, I view my own life to be more valuable.”

When Marquis Nanlong heard this, he shook his head and said little further.

At that moment, Lu Weiying finished placing down his final formation plate and activated his restriction, creating a layer of indistinct white mist around them. Lu Weiying nodded with satisfaction and turned his head to look at the stone gate glowing with crimson light.

Marquis Nanlong had already grown somewhat impatient at this point. When he saw that Lu Weiying had finally finished, he immediately took a storage pouch from his waist and flung it into the air. Suddenly, white light poured out from it to reveal the crystalline remains of the ancient cultivator.

“The Blood Curse Gate is quite strange. Breaking the gate’s restrictions requires either the essence or flesh of the caster. The flesh is obviously gone, but a bit of the cultivator’s essence should still be present in his bones.” Marquis Nanlong spoke with a heavy voice. Then he spat out a golden flying sword and reached out to the floor as he clenched his hand into a fist. The bones suddenly

floated off the ground and rose to twenty meters in the air.

Marquis Nanlong flicked his finger and launched a white spell seal, striking his golden sword at its center. As it hummed, the sword trembled and the tip suddenly burst with blinding golden light.

Soon after, the sword tip grew brighter until it released a ball of golden light. The ball of light then shot out and struck the bones that were floating in the air, the golden light suddenly ruptured.

Countless streaks of sword Qi suddenly wrapped all around the skeleton and completely enveloped it. An instant later, bone dust drifted down from the sky.

Light flashed from Marquis Nanlong's eyes and he flung his sleeve. A mist of golden light shot out and swept up all the translucent grains of bone. As for the golden sword Qi in the air, it had already disappeared.

Marquis Nanlong nodded when he saw that the golden light had swept up the entirety of the translucent bone dust and turned to look at Lu Weiying. When Lu Weiying saw this, he knew what Marquis Nanlong wanted him to do. He clapped his hands together and took out a white flag. With a slight shake, winds began to gather around the flag.

By then, Marquis Nanlong had already sat cross-legged and formed a hand gesture. With a muffled incantation, various-colored spell seals flew from his hand and struck the golden mist that enveloped the bone dust. Under the influence of the spell seals, the bone dust within the golden mist began to slowly revolve.

The translucent bone dust gradually twinkled with various colors causing it to grow extremely bright.

At that moment, Lu Weiying launched a probing strike at the stone gate. Rather than commanding an attack with his spell flag,

he launched several fireballs towards the stone gate from his other hand.

The fireballs roiled through the air as they grew close to the stone gate, crimson light wildly flashed and came to life, condensing into a large mass of scarlet light and taking the form of a three-meter-tall ghost face that was identical to the one carved on the stone gate. After it consumed the fireballs that were about to strike the gate, it flickered and immediately disappeared.

When Lu Weiying saw the scene, he grew alarmed and with some hesitation, he pointed the flag at the stone gate. The wind dragon that had condensed around the flag then screamed through the air as it charged at the stone gate.

The ghost face reappeared and its mouth gaped open. A beam of light was shot out of its mouth, engulfing the wind dragon and dragging it into its mouth. Fury and alarm momentarily appeared on Lu Weiying's face.

Lu Weiying and Marquis Nanlong couldn't help but glance at each other in dismay.

Marquis Nanlong sighed and slowly said, "The Blood Curse Gate is truly quite odd. Let's just dispel the restriction in accordance to the method Master Cang Kun described."

Lu Weiying rubbed his chin and could only nod. Although he had more powerful attacks, the ghost face was truly bizarre. He wasn't willing to overreach himself and potentially ruin this matter. Given Master Cang Kun's magnificent reputation in the past, his method of dissolving the restriction should prove better.

"Go!" Marquis Nanlong softly shouted before he pointed to the ball of golden light in the sky. It hummed and glowed magnificently before sweeping towards the stone gate.

Crimson light flickered and the ghost face reappeared. But as the golden light approached the ghost face, it merged with the bone

dust it was carrying and transformed into specks of white light before sticking onto the ghost face.

When the ghost face touched the specks of light, it suddenly began to dissolve into grey smoke, and the grey smoke soon enveloped the entire stone gate.

Howling ghostly wails loudly erupted from the center of the smoke and crimson light flickered without end. Thick crimson tentacles began to emerge from the mist and do their utmost to strike at the ground nearby as if the gate were coming to life. But in the blink of an eye, the grey smoke that enveloped it also disappeared.

When Marquis Nanlong saw this, he shouted, “It’s now! Act!” He then pointed at the golden sword in front of him and he grasped his hand in an incantation gesture. The entirety of the spiritual power in his body was poured into the flying sword through a spell seal and the golden sword tore through the air in a blinding streak of light.

Lu Weiying’s face turned gloomy and he poured a majority of his spiritual power into the flag before tossing it out. In a flicker of white light, the flag transformed into several wind dragons, all whistling towards the stone gate.

In the blink of an eye, the golden streak of light and the wind dragons entered the grey mist and a world-shaking tremble appeared as the gales, golden light, and crimson light intertwined, resulting in a chaotic explosion.

Gales wildly blew away the grey smoke that obscured the sight of the stone gate. When Marquis Nanlong saw what was behind it, he narrowed his eyes and saw that the crimson light had disappeared as if the restriction was completely dissolved.

After looking around, Marquis Nanlong spotted his small golden sword embedded halfway into the stone gate. Sending a command with his spiritual sense, the small sword flew out from the stone

gate and covered itself in a meter long streak of golden light before wildly slashing at the gate.

With violent rumbles, golden light brightly shined and chunks of the stone gate were crushed while the smell of blood filled the air.

But when Marquis Nanlong and Lu Wieying clearly saw the fragments from the stone gate, their expressions had changed.

The crushed fragments of stone seemed to resemble men and they seemed to be bleeding with black-tainted blood, the source of the bloody smell. The scene was truly awful to behold.

Although the stone gate had been shattered, the two cultivators hadn't discovered anything extraordinary. Rather, there was a dark flight of stairs that led deep into the earth.

"Let's go! I can clearly see that the Blood Curse Gate is a mysterious treasure in of itself." Marquis Nanlong looked at the path below and called out to Lu Weiying. He then began to walk down in large strides.

Lu Weiying stood in place for a long while. He glanced at the black-blooded remains of the Blood Curse Gate and the passage that led underground. With a tense brow, he let out a long sigh and followed after Marquis Nanlong.

To Lu Weiying's surprise, the passageway was rather short. It went down only about sixty meters before they arrived at an underground hall. The hall was only about thirty meters in length and was completely bare apart from an offerings table at its center.

When Lu Weiying entered the hall, Marquis Nanlong was already standing at the center of the hall and was staring at the items on the table, his mind completely blank.

Lu Weiying bewilderedly walked to his side and also felt his heart become completely shaken.

"Heaven Essence Fruit! If I am correct, once one of these is eaten, it can extend one's lifespan for a hundred years. That purple

mushroom is the legendary Heavenmend Mushroom. It should be over ten thousand years old. It should have the power to progress one's cultivation by several tens of years worth of time. That sparkling golden bamboo should be Golden Lightning Bamboo, one of the three divine woods. And this..." Lu Weiying woke up from his amazement and began to mutter without sense. He didn't seem to believe all the items that were laid before him and he unconsciously took a few steps forward to look at them closer.

In Lu Weiying's excitement, Marquis Nanlong coldly said, "Fellow Daoist Lu, if I were you, I wouldn't act so rashly. Do you truly believe that the spirit medicines would just sit here ready for the taking? How about examining our surroundings?"

"Brother Nanlong, that does make sense." Lu Weiying woke up from his excitement and glanced around him in alarm.

Lu Weiying eventually discovered a few talisman characters written on the walls and felt a wave of shock. "Yi! This seems to be the legendary Sanctuary Guardian Formation, a Buddhist spell formation. Why has it appeared here?"

Chapter 827: Minor Sanctuary Guardian Formation

Although Marquis Nanlong sounded calm, he stared at the medicine herbs with intense desire, wishing with all his heart to grab them. They were exactly what they both needed. Now that they were so close at hand, Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying found their excitement and greed to be nearly irrepressible.

Just as Marquis Nanlong entered the room, he immediately caught sight of the medicine herbs and immediately reached for the herbs, but he hadn't expected for such a strange spell formation to exist there. As a result, he was repelled by a strong force and was forced to wait for Lu Weiying to catch up to him.

When he heard Lu Weiying mention the name Sanctuary Guardian Formation, Marquis Nanlong felt his spirit shake with joy. When he encountered the restriction, he sensed that it was far different from any formation he had researched in the past, much to his worry. It was quite relieving that Lu Weiying knew it was.

Marquis Nanlong forcefully stifled his excitement and asked, "Brother Lu, you know of this restriction?"

"In the past, I had acquired some cultivation records from a few Buddhist sects. Although I wasn't able to cultivate their techniques, I did research a few of their spell formations. The Minor Sanctuary Guardian Formation was amongst the most amazing of them. Brother Nanlong, if it is truly that formation, it will be extremely troublesome." Lu Weiying glanced at the table and began to frown.

Marquis Nanlong spoke with a tone of disbelief, "What do you mean? Could it be that the spell formation cannot be broken?"

Lu Weiying wore a solemn expression and explained, "This Minor Sanctuary Guardian Formation is an Immortal isolating

formation. It is one of the few restrictions in this world that can only be broken with brute force; there are no other ways of shattering it. We will need to continuously unleash a variety of attacks against the spell formation without end. Although its defensive abilities aren't above that of others, the spell formation is incredibly durable and will quickly restore itself unless it is completely destroyed. It is well deserving of being a Buddhist spell formation given its tenacious nature.”

As if verifying what he had just said, Lu Weiying waved his hand and shot a fireball at the table ten meters in front of him. With a bang, the fireball exploded and disappeared before it even touched it.

A layer of spiritual light condensed above the table and golden light brightly shined. Small strings of ancient talisman characters appeared on the barrier, resembling little silver flowers.

Marquis Nanlong's expression grew sullen. Having seen this before, he didn't appear particularly alarmed.

“Yi! What's this?” Lu Weiying cried out in alarm. Marquis Nanlong unconsciously looked at him, seeing that he was currently staring at a portion of the golden barrier with an expression of amazement.

In his astonishment, spiritual light flickered from Marquis Nanlong's eyes as he attempted to see as far into the barrier as he could. Through the golden light, he could see a silver alms bowl the size of a head floating in the air.

The surface of the alms bowl had various profound talisman characters drifting on top of it. Floating around the bowl were eight faint white jade talismans pointed towards it, and there were three exquisite items that were motionlessly floating above it.

Marquis Nanlong attentively focused at the sight and saw that they were a small silver sword, a jet-black Buddhist staff, and a blood-red pearl. Although the three items were only about an inch

long, they emitted strands of light that intertwined together to cover the alms bowl that was floating above the table.

Marquis Nanlong was dumbstruck. The alms bowl, jade talismans, and the three magic tools had all strangely disappeared from sight above the table. Then the golden barrier surrounded by talisman characters silently disappeared.

‘What is happening? When the light barrier first appeared, those items weren’t there, but when Lu Weiying struck it, those items appeared above it?’ Marquis Nanlong’s mouth was shut tight as he saw the light barrier disappear before him, his eyes flickering with bewilderment.

Lu Weiying didn’t have this doubt. He simply looked at the items that had newly appeared and pondered for a moment. ‘It is clear to see that the spirit medicines only served as a backdrop to the other items in the formation. What treasures could prove even more valuable than these heaven-defying medicine herbs?’

Although this was only conjecture, Lu Weiying felt his heart pound. His original misgivings and worries about the Blood Curse Gate were now tossed to the back of his mind.

“Brother Lu, it seems we’ve come to the right place. If we are able to break the Buddhist spell formation, our journey will not be in vain.” Marquis Nanlong came to the same conclusion as Lu Weiying and smiled at him.

Lu Weiying wore a faint smile and said, “That’s right. I didn’t think that there would be so many secret treasures hidden behind the Blood Curse Gate. However, dissolving the restriction isn’t an easy matter. It won’t be possible unless we spend a large chunk of time and sacrifice our strength.”

“Hehe! Not to mention sacrificing my strength, but I’d be willing to sacrifice ten years of my lifespan in order to acquire those treasures. You said that only brute strength can dissolve the formation? It seems we’re going to be quite busy. There is no time

to lose. Let's start immediately." Marquis Nanlong then looked at Lu Weiying and openly said, "And when we break the formation, shall we split the treasures evenly?"

"Of course. Let's do as you say." Lu Weiying also wished to acquire the treasure and replied promptly, much to Marquis Nanlong's satisfaction.

At that moment, the two increased the distance between them and developed a sense of vigilance against each other.

Afterwards, Lu Weiying took out a white flag and flung it into the air before taking a seat with his hands held in an incantation gesture. Marquis Nanlong waved his sleeve and flung a golden sword into the air.

Suddenly, both a gale and sword Qi were summoned. As they approached the table, the golden light barrier made another appearance and explosions began to continuously sound out deep underground.

...

Near the top of a mountain, a streak of azure light was flying through the sky. It was Han Li who was hurrying on his way.

He had already passed through the mountain with the Purple-lined Scorpions and was about to enter the cave to head back to the outer valley. Because Han Li had traveled along this path before, the journey went smoothly and quickly. What took a day's travel before would now only take him a third of the time.

Just as he was two hours from the cave, he suddenly heard a chain of explosions in the distance.

His expression stirred and he paused to take a look at the source in the distance. He quickly spread out his spiritual sense and sensed strange spiritual Qi fluctuations.

Han Li unconsciously narrowed his eyes and saw that there were faint flashes of white light coming from a mountain in the

distance. If he wasn't mistaken, it was an area that he suspected to have restrictions. It was possibly an area that contained treasures from ancient cultivators. It appeared other cultivators also entered the valley depths in search for treasure.

Just as Han Li pondered this, he shook his head. He was momentarily tempted to take advantage of the chaos for his own gain, but he soon stifled the idea. Since he was afraid of catching the attention of others, he only quickly swept his spiritual sense past them and didn't take a closer look at the treasure hunters.

As of current, Han Li felt that it was better to avoid any troubles that could come his way. That in mind, he tore through the skies and soon disappeared.

Tens of kilometers away in the direction that Han Li had looked, there were a group of a dozen cultivators that were furiously striking at a white barrier covering a small mountain. Those leading them was the Moulan Divine Sage Zhong and the woman surnamed Le. The group of cultivators were all Moulan spell warriors.

Just as Han Li flew off, Divine Sage Zhong's brow stirred and he unconsciously glanced in Han Li's direction.

Spell Warrior Le noticed the scholarly man's glance and asked, "What? Has Brother Zhong discovered something amiss?"

The scholarly man indifferently replied, "It's nothing. I just felt a Heavenly South cultivator sweep their spiritual sense past this direction. However, it seems they don't wish to interfere and they flew away after finding us. Since we're so close to breaking the restriction, let's not delve too deeply into the matter."

Spell Warrior Le sighed and helplessly said, "Brother Zhong makes sense. We have reached the crucial moment for breaking the restriction. I hope it isn't like the other restriction we broke where there were no treasures to be found, not to mention the two men that we lost to spatial tears"

When Divine Sage Zhong heard this, his face grew sullen. “There is nothing that we can do about that. There is no way we can guard against those invisible spatial tears. The low-grade spirit birds we prepared had all gone made once we entered the valley and they were completely uncontrollable. If we were able to have them scout ahead for us, we wouldn’t have lost two men.”

Spell Warrior Le pensively said, “Those spirit birds didn’t seem to go mad, but were overwhelmed by their fear of the inner valley. Could there be something here that is specialized in restraining demon beasts? The Blackwing Hawk I borrowed is a grade five spirit beast but even it wasn’t able to hear my orders once we entered the valley. It is even unwilling to leave the spirit beast pouch. There is something truly odd about this Devilfall Valley.”

A cold glint appeared in the scholarly man’s eyes and he gloomily said, “Perhaps. It is known as the most dangerous place in the Heavenly South. Naturally, there will be something strange about this place. However, we didn’t come here to unravel the valley’s secrets but to search for ancient treasures and medicines on behalf of the Moulan. As such, we must continue even if we can’t use spirit birds. We had to make a trade with the four superpowers of the Heavenly South in order to come by this golden opportunity. We can’t waste it now.”

Chapter 828: Joining Together

As Divine Sage Zhong and Cultivator Lu were having their discussion, Han Li had already flown over fifty kilometers away. Nothing else occurred on his way and he arrived at the cave after another hour of flight.

When he arrived, he took out the Yin Yang Ring once more and entered the passageway with the treasure's protection. He quickly passed through the passage and quickened his steps when he saw the light of the cave's exit.

Soon, his surroundings brightened and he found himself back in front of a cliff leading to the outer valley.

Han Li raised his head to look at the dusky sky. Although it still gave him a feeling of unease, it was far better than the crimson light that covered the sky in the valley depths.

After sweeping his spiritual sense over the nearby area and discovering there were no cultivators or any other oddities, Han Li sighed with relief and turned his gaze to the wall around the cave entrance.

With a wave of his hand, an azure spell seal flew out and entered the stone wall without a trace. Soon after, Han Li silently formed another hand gesture as he began to slowly mutter an incantation while a strange scene followed.

The unremarkable stone wall suddenly began to glow with a layer of blue light before a swarm of Gold Devouring Beetles flocked out from the wall, each of them carrying various-sized pieces of silver crystal. A few pieces were as large as a fist while others were as small as a grain of sand. In the blink of an eye, the pieces of silver crystal delivered by the beetles had formed a pile in front of Han Li. They were the crystalized Tailstar Silver ore.

When the first pieces appeared, Han Li's expression was calm,

but excitement began to show when tens of these crystals dropped down.

“Youngster Han! The Tailstar Silver ore vein is far bigger than I imagined. It seems I will be able to research using this material in creating puppets.” Suddenly, the Monarch of Soul Divergence’s voice appeared in Han Li’s mind. He couldn’t help but betray his delight from his voice.

After the Gold Devouring Beetles had deposited the last of the Tailstar Silver crystal, Han Li looked at the small pile of shimmering silver and smiled. “That’s right. I also didn’t think the Tailstar Silver ore vein would contain this much. We’ve gathered quite the harvest!”

Han Li swung his sleeve over the ground and swept up the silver crystals into his storage pouch in an instant. Afterwards, he sharply whistled and the Gold Devouring Beetles revolved around him before rushing back into their storage pouch.

Once this was done, Han Li slapped his storage pouch and a translucent ball appeared in his palm. He then blew a mist of azure light onto the pearl and a bean-sized speck of light appeared within the ball.

Han Li stared at the pearl in his hand for a long while and slightly frowned before looking around him. After getting his bearings, his body glowed with azure light and he streaked through the sky.

Han Li wasn’t flying in a hurry and as he flew with the transparent ball in his hand, he would occasionally stop to look at it before adjusting his course and continuing on his way.

After flying for tens of kilometers, he arrived above a wilderness and yelped with surprise before coming to a sudden stop. His body blurred and he quickly descended. By the time he was a hundred meters above the wilderness, Han Li stopped and light flashed from his eyes.

He saw a male cultivator's corpse split in half lying in the wilderness and the surroundings had already been stained dark red with the hardened blood. As for the cultivator's magic treasure and storage pouch, they were nowhere to be seen.

Han Li glanced at the corpse for a moment and sighed, "It seems someone had attacked him." After verifying that there were no spatial tears nearby, he knew there was only one possible conclusion.

Han Li didn't linger there for long and quickly continued on his way. Although he believed that there were few things in the valley that posed a threat to him apart from the two late Nascent Soul cultivators, it would still prove dangerous if a group of cultivators were to surround and ambush him.

While this wasn't likely, Han Li traveled with heightened wariness regardless. After half a day had passed, Han Li still hadn't found any signs of an ambush. Rather, he came across two cultivators who had perished as a result of spatial tears. Han Li shook his head at the sight of their broken bodies.

Following the guidance of the transparent ball in his hand, he eventually arrived above a dense and verdant forest.

Han Li muttered to himself for a moment before gripping the transparent ball in his hand and exerting strength into it. In a flash of azure light, it shattered with a clear ring.

When the ball shattered into fragments, the speck of azure light that floated inside of it was freed. The speck of light floated in front of Han Li while waiting for further instruction. The bean-sized speck of light flickered before shooting off as soon as he pointed at it while he closely followed after it.

A moment later in the sky above the dense forest, the speck of light flickered and began to fly downwards. As Han Li descended after it, a glint shined within his eyes. When it arrived at the ground, the speck of light spun around a gigantic tree before

disappearing into its trunk.

When Han Li saw this, he landed in front of the tree and the light around him faded away. He quickly sized up the tree before pressing his hand against it.

With a muffled bang, green light flashed from where he pressed his palm and an azure talisman floated from the tree. He swiftly grabbed the talisman between his finger and glanced at it with a smile before tossing it into the air.

Woosh. The talisman set itself on fire before streaking into the sky in a fiery red line.

This time, Han Li stood still for a moment and sat cross-legged on the ground before closing his eyes and restoring the magic power he had consumed on his way here.

Not long after, the streak of red light dropped down at an unremarkable corner of the forest. Then another streak of light emerged into the sky and flew towards Han Li's location.

Before the streak of light arrived, Han Li slowly opened his eyes and watched as it approached.

The streak of light soon arrived. It flew once around Han Li as if verifying his identity and then swooped down. As soon as the streak touched the ground, the light instantly disappeared to reveal a white-robed woman who possessed an otherworldly beauty.

Han Li calmly looked at her and said, “Lady Violet Spirit! You arrived quite quickly!”

“Quickly? I’ve already been waiting here for several days. During that time, seven groups of cultivators have searched through this forest, and I grew more nervous each time it happened. I would’ve left soon if Brother Han didn’t arrive.” Violet Spirit’s pleasant voice seemed to contain a bit of annoyance as she walked towards him with graceful steps.

Han Li smiled and looked at Violet Spirit's flawless face before continuing, "Lady Violet Spirit revealing her true appearance has come as a surprise to me. I had believed that it was easy for you to conceal."

Violet Spirit pursed her lips and sweetly said, "When I entered the valley, I had used a treasure to conceal my true appearance. However, there seems to be a restriction in the valley that has rendered it ineffective. Without it to conceal my true appearance, I have no choice but wear it. What? Could it be that my uncouth appearance is below Brother Han's notice?"

"Fairy Violet Spirit must be joking." With a wry chuckle, his expression suddenly became solemn as he said, "That's enough joking around. Was this the first place you found that was marked?"

Violet Spirit withdrew her smile and answered, "That's right. It should be genuine since the original mark was destroyed by the Ghost Spirit Sect. However, finding it should prove to be no problem."

When Han Li heard her mention the Ghost Spirit Sect, he raised his brow and coldly smiled. "Since that's the case, let's just follow the Ghost Spirit Sect disciples. It should save us quite a bit of time."

"As Brother Han commands! A month ago, I placed a tracker unique to the Exquisite Sound Sect onto the Ghost Spirit Sect disciple who gave me the information. The tracker isn't something created from magic power but by a fragrance undetectable to others. While the range of this fragrance isn't large and it disappears after two months, it should still be enough to track down the Ghost Spirit Sect disciple that I placed it on."

"I will have to trouble Fellow Daoist Violet Spirit to lead the way. First, we will track down the Ghost Spirit Sect disciple and rush past the marks they placed before. This way, the Spirit Kindle

Fruit will be ours.” Han Li nodded and then slowly stood up.

A silver-tailed squirrel suddenly shot out from the dense forest and flew into the sky. It then sniffed the air before flying off in a certain direction.

Soon after, two streaks of light flew in a circle before closely flying after it.

Chapter 829: Portrait

As Han Li followed after the flying squirrel tracking the Ghost Spirit Sect Elder Zhong, the Ghost Spirit Sect Master's party had passed through a huge mountain and arrived at a basin.

The basin was dim and damp with various sized puddles on the ground that made it miserable for the party of cultivators to walk through. Although they were able to use a few minor spell techniques to ward off the mud and dirty water, their speed was massively reduced.

Regardless of their currently discomfort, none of them complained. When they had climbed over the huge mountain, they managed to survey everything that laid in the distance and caught sight of the huge altar located at the center of the basin. This was the first time that they had seen an intact building since they had entered Devilfall Valley. Based solely on that fact, it was needless to say that the place was unordinary; it was also likely that it had something to do with the Spirit Ether Garden. As a result, Wei Wuya and the Ghost Spirit Sect cultivators trudged on with burning anticipation despite their slowed steps.

It wasn't that they hadn't thought of floating above the ground, but that they had nearly been struck by a bolt of crimson lightning when they tried. It seemed that the closer they were to the center of the basin, the more ferocious the restrictions became, eliminating any inclination of theirs to further test the restrictions.

After walking through the mire for half a day, the party of cultivators eventually arrived near the altar with only shrubbery in their way. The alter appeared giant even at a distance.

The altar was carved out of white mountain stone and stacked with huge steppes. It was absolutely towering, reaching over a kilometer into the sky. It was a truly grand and imposing

structure. But given its vast height and the distance from them, they were still unable to clearly see its base.

Although Wei Wuya was treading through the murky water, his entire body emitted a faint green light that allowed him to slip through it in a smooth manner. He calmly said, “It should only take four hours at most before we arrive. Sect Master Wang, I am quite curious about the Spirit Ether Graden now that we are so close to it.”

Wang Tiansheng faintly smiled and casually said, “Brother Wei, be at ease. When the time comes, I will be certain to tell you everything.”

Wei Wuya nodded and was about to ask something further when a green light suddenly flashed from the Ghost Spirit Sect disciple walking at the very front. The disciple tumbled back before his head rolled off his body, followed by his chest, landing in the murky waters with a splash.

“Spatial tear!” When Wang Tiansheng heard this, his expression vastly changed. Wei Wuya and Wang Tiangu also wore solemn expressions at the.

Although Wei Wuya and Wang Tiangu didn’t know what Wang Tiansheng was plotting, their path had gone smoothly before this and they had grown relaxed and careless. Now that a spatial tear had appeared before them, they couldn’t help but feel their hearts tremble.

When the other three Ghost Spirit Sect disciples saw this, their faces paled, and the entire party came to a stop.

Wang Tiansheng looked at the corpse of the disciple killed by the spatial tear and his expression wavered.

During that moment, Wei Wuya closed his eyes and swept his spiritual sense around him before opening them once more. He expressionlessly shook his head and said, “This won’t do. The

spatial tears aren't large enough to be sensed with spiritual sense."

When Wang Tiangu heard this, he flicked his fingers several times, launching five fireballs in succession. Three of the fireballs disappeared without a trace while the other two exploded upon contacting the ground, leaving two large holes behind.

Wang Tiangu said with a relaxed tone, "The spatial tear is very small and is only somewhat slanted. We'll be able to walk around it."

With a gloomy tone, Wang Tiansheng muttered, "Although this spatial tear is small, who knows how many we will encounter the rest of the way? We don't have many lives to spare. According to what I know, there shouldn't even be any spatial tears blocking our way. Could it be that that person has hidden something?"

Wei Wuya's expression stirred when he heard this, but he said nothing. As for Wang Tiangu, he glanced at the altar in the distance before looking back at the corpse lying on the ground, appearing somewhat confused.

"Then what should we do, Sect Master?"

Wang Tiansheng tensely frowned and he glanced at the sky without immediately replying. After a moment of silence, he let out a long sigh and said, "Originally, I planned on waiting until we arrived at the altar before saying anything, but I no longer have a choice. I will tell you everything."

When Wei Wuya and the others heard this, they glanced at each other with dismay.

Wang Tiansheng waved his sleeve in a flourish of silver light, summoning a plain scroll into his hand. The scroll was a meter long and shined with silver light.

"That is..." Wang Tiangu couldn't help but cry out at the sight of the scroll.

Wang Tiansheng looked at Wang Tiangu and chuckled, "Of

course you know what this is. You personally gave it to me, after all. Everything I know about the Spirit Ether Garden is from this scroll.”

When Wang Tiangu heard this, he was stunned. The scroll was the portrait of Master Cang Kun that had been inside his hidden lair in the Moulan Plains.

Wang Tiansheng tossed the scroll out and suspended it in the air in a ball of light. He then formed an incantation gesture and pointed at the scroll. With a crackle, the scroll quickly unfolded, revealing the portrait of a scholarly man wearing Confucian robes with a sword on his back as he looked to the sky at the rear of the portrait.

Wang Tiangu and the others widely opened their eyes as they stared at the portrait. But after a while, none of them were able to sense anything from it. But when Wei Wuya swept his spiritual sense past the portrait, his expression stirred and a trace of astonishment appeared on his face.

Wang Tiansheng stirred upon seeing Wei Wuya’s change in expression and he said, “As expected of a late Nascent Soul cultivator. Fellow Daoist Wei was able to discover the mystery quite quickly. I was only able to find the peculiarity of the scroll because I had cultivated a certain secret technique.”

“It’s nothing special. It’s like a spatial pocket magic tool that I had seen a long time ago. If Fellow Daoist Wang hadn’t mentioned it to me, I wouldn’t have been able to easily discover it.” Wei Wuya responded with an odd expression.

Wang Tiansheng smiled and asked no further. He then raised his hand and released a black spell seal from his sleeve, striking at the scroll. He then coldly snorted and said, “Are you not going to come out? Do you want me to use devilfire to force you out?”

The others were alarmed to hear this and felt somewhat baffled. Wei Wuya also raised his brow in surprise and his face betrayed a

trace of bewilderment.

Afterwards, an inconceivable event occurred. A man's voice clearly left the scroll, "Isn't this earlier than we had agreed? Why would you summon me before you arrived? Now that you've called out to me in front of so many people, do you want to call off our deal?"

Silver light shined from the scroll, and the scholarly man in the portrait suddenly turned around to reveal the face of a middle-aged man with long facial hair. However, he appeared quite displeased.

Not only were the remaining Ghost Spirit Sect disciples astonished by the scene, but Wang Tiangu's jaw dropped as well with an expression of astonishment. As for Wei Wuya, he only revealed his shock for a short moment before calming down. He then stared at the portrait with a pensive expression.

Wang Tiansheng snorted, "Didn't I repeatedly ask you if the route you gave me was completely safe? There was an invisible spatial tear here that slew my sect disciple."

"When I walked this path, it was completely safe. How could there be a problem now?" The portrait's lips moved to rebuke him.

"Then explain this." The Ghost Spirit Sect Master sullenly glanced at the disciple's corpse that laid near the invisible spatial tear.

The portrait paused for a moment and muttered to himself before fading away from sight. Then in a flicker of light, an azure screen of light appeared in front of them.

Soon after, a sphere of green light shot out from the curtain of light and transformed into a silhouette of the scholarly man from the portrait. His body appeared incorporeal as if he were made entirely of light. The light was so faint that it was almost as if the image could be blown away with a single breath.

Wang Tiangu's mouth dried and he uttered with shock, "How

should I address you? Could it be you are truly Master Cang Kun? How were you able to maintain your soul past your lifespan and exist until now?"

"The time I can emerge from the scroll is limited. If you have any questions, ask your sect master. I will be taking a look at the spatial tear." The scholarly man didn't pay any attention to Wang Tiangu's shock and looked in the direction of the spatial tear. He faintly frowned and spat out a ball of grey light from his mouth.

With a bang, the ball of grey light was consumed by the spatial tear. The scholarly man appeared baffled at the sight of this.

"How strange!" The scholarly man's surprise soon disappeared and he calmly said, "In the past, there were no spatial tears here. It seems to be a rare newly formed tear. You don't need to be too worried about it as it is merely a matter of coincidence. I will be returning now."

Woosh. His figure disappeared and the ball of green light flew back into the scroll as if unwilling to spend any more time outside than absolutely necessary.

Chapter 830: Thousand Strands of Spiritual Sense

The scholarly man's silhouette disappeared in the blink of an eye, much to the astonishment of everyone nearby.

Wei Wuya paused and said, "Sect Master Wang, is that person truly Master Cang Kun? Since this person only has a little bit of essence remaining, he can't pose much of a threat, regardless of how fearful he may have been in the past. Was he the one who told you about the Spirit Ether Garden?"

Wang Tiansheng's face had relaxed when he heard that the spatial tear was something that had newly appeared. He then turned to Wei Wuya and said, "To start with, we can say that he both is Master Cang Kun and is not Master Cang Kun. And yes, everything we know about the Spirit Ether Garden came from him."

"What do you mean? There is no need to keep it a mystery." Wei Wuya said with an annoyed tone.

Wang Tiansheng indifferently explained, "Brother Wei misunderstands. The portrait soul you witnessed was the scattered soul of one of Master Cang Kun's incarnations. When this incarnation probed into Devilfall Valley, it was destroyed by a restriction. As a result, Master Cang Kun used a soul nurturing technique to refine the soul fragment into a scroll magic tool for recovery. But now that the genuine Master Cang Kun died countless years ago, this soul incarnation has become independent. It isn't strange to say that this soul incarnation has become a different person entirely."

Wei Wuya expressed surprise when he heard this while Wang Tiangu pursed his lips and wryly chuckled. It wasn't clear whether or not he was bitter about not having discovered the secret of the scroll or because of his previously excitement.

Wei Wuya nodded and coldly said, “It seems you’ve reached an agreement with that soul remnant and he’s told you about the Spirit Ether Garden. However, this has nothing to do with me. I only care about entering the garden. Now that I’ve reached this age, I only care about entering the Deity Transformation stage and ascending to the Spirit Realm.”

“Brother Wei is quite a sensible individual. This way is for the best. Alright, since the spatial tear was only an anomaly, let’s continue!” The Ghost Spirit Sect Master smiled and pointed to one of the disciples to continue leading the way.

The disciple paled when he saw this, but he continued onward nevertheless, avoiding the spatial tear in the way. Wei Wuya gradually quickened his steps and the other Ghost Spirit Sect disciples followed suit, making their way toward the huge altar in the distance.

...

Standing inside of a glacial area deeply layered in frost, Han Li raised his head toward the crimson light above him. He then faced Violet Spirit and said, “What’s going on? Your flying squirrel has gone mad.” Not far behind them, there was a two-hundred-meter wide ravine of ice. Han Li and Violet Spirit had passed through it to enter the valley depths.

Surrounding them now was a land of ice, snow, and the howls of bone-chilling winds. However, Han Li’s azure robes remained completely still as if unaffected by the frost.

“I don’t know. My flying squirrel was doing fine on the outside, but when it passed through the ravine, it suddenly went mad. Fortunately, I withdrew it quickly before something could happen. Even after it entered the Spirit Beast Pouch, it’s still completely frantic.” Violet Spirit frowned in complete confusion.

Han Li muttered to himself before suddenly slapping his storage pouch. A small group of Gold Devouring Beetles were released and

they buzzed as they gathered in a small cloud above his head before remaining completely still. Then with a mental command, the small group of beetles immediately returned to his storage pouch with complete obedience.

Han Li stroked his chin and his gaze flickered as he slapped another storage pouch to summon a black streak of light. It revolved once above his head and then dropped down a meter in front of Han Li. The light faded away to reveal a small black monkey that was several inches tall, the Weeping Soul Beast.

It yawned and blinked, blankly staring at Han Li as if it had just woken up.

Han Li watched the beast for a long while before summoning a wave of azure light with a sweep of his sleeve. And in another flash of light, the Weeping Soul Beast disappeared from sight.

Han Li pondered to himself for a moment and turned to Violet Spirit. Having come to a decision, he said, “Since you’ve lost control of your flying squirrel, I have no choice but to rely on myself to track down the Ghost Spirit Sect. Fortunately, we aren’t too far away from them now that we’ve entered the valley depths. I will spread out my spiritual sense and look for any tracks they left behind. Guard me for the time being.”

Han Li was relieved that the Gold Devouring Beetles and the Weeping Soul Beast were unaffected by the valley depths. But this might’ve been expected as they were far from ordinary, being top ranked exotic insects and a fearsome beast variant, respectively.

Of course, Han Li couldn’t have known that Marquis Nanlong’s Eternal Flight Orioles were also unaffected by the valley, unlike the Moulan’s spirit birds and Violet Spirit’s flying squirrel. The cause behind this had something to do with a secret that lay hidden in the valley depths.

Violet Spirit bit her lips and helplessly said, “Then all we can do is rely on Brother Han’s abilities.”

Han Li nodded and promptly sat down cross-legged. With his eyes closed, his body began to brilliantly shine with light as strands of Qi occasionally floated in the air. Violet Spirit waited at the side, her clear eyes staring at Han Li's expressionless face.

To tell the truth, she felt some unclear and unknown emotions towards Han Li. It wasn't entirely accurate to say that they were only good friends and she had felt some delight when Han Li became dumbfounded upon seeing her true appearance.

She definitely couldn't be considered his confidante either. Although she had gone through many trials and tribulations with Han Li until now, he had never truly laid his heart bare to her as if intentionally increasing the distance between them. It seemed he had no intention of taking things any further.

As a matter of fact, with Han Li's current status and cultivation, if he had proposed to marry her she was still unsure whether or not she would accept. She had unintentionally found out from the Drifting Cloud Sect's Cultivator Song that Han Li already had a Dao Companion by the name of Nangong Wan, much to her disappointment. It felt as if something of hers had been snatched away.

Violet Spirit's mind remained in a daze as she stared at Han Li's face, her imagination running rampant.

Of course, Han Li was completely ignorant of all of this. He had already released his spiritual sense to sweep through a fifty kilometer radius and see if there were any Ghost Spirit Sect cultivators around. But as a result, his search ended in vain.

Han Li frowned but he wasn't discouraged. He then spread out his spiritual sense to scan over a hundred kilometers away, but was still unable to discover the aura of any other cultivators.

After some consideration, Han Li tossed a spirit beast pouch into the air and he formed an incantation gesture with his hands, releasing over a thousand Gold Devouring Beetles into the air.

“Go!” Han Li widely opened his eyes and waved his hand, striking at the beetles with an azure spell seal. The beetle swarm loudly buzzed before scattering and flying off in every direction.

Han Li then closed his eyes once more and the light surrounding his body became even more brilliant. When Violet Spirit saw this, she wore an expression of alarm. She didn’t know what Han Li had just done.

At that moment, Han Li had already reached the pinnacle of the Great Development Technique. He had forcefully divided his spiritual sense into over a thousand different strands and sent almost all of them to attach themselves to each Gold Devouring Beetle, leaving behind only a few strands on his body to protect himself.

His strands of spiritual sense were able to see through the eyes of the Gold Devouring Beetle that they possessed, but they weren’t able to sense a cultivator’s aura. The beetles had begun to spread out and look for traces of cultivators that might appear.

Of course, there were beetles that came across a spatial tear or became trapped in a restriction, but this didn’t pose much of a threat to something that lacked physical form such as a strand of spiritual sense. Whenever a Gold Devouring Beetle met a mishap, the attached spiritual sense strand would abandon its host and return to Han Li’s body, but there still were times where these strands were either destroyed or trapped.

When this occurred, Han Li decisively severed his connection to those strands and turned his attention elsewhere. But for each strand of spiritual sense he lost, he couldn’t help but grow pale. Fortunately, his spiritual sense was beyond powerful and he was able to withstand these losses without much harm and recover quickly.

With these thousand Gold Devouring Beetles swarming the sky, Han Li eventually found a clue leading to the route that the Ghost

Spirit Sect took moving forward. He immediately commanded all of his Gold Devouring Beetles to return. Once the last Gold Devouring Beetles returned to their pouch, Han Li opened his eyes with a cold smile.

“We’re going! I found their trail.” With that said, Han Li stood up and flew through the sky in an azure streak of light. When Violet Spirit saw this, she rejoiced and closely followed after him.

Shortly after, Han Li and Violet Spirit appeared above an expanse of scattered stone. Han Li stared at the newly appeared hold with a strange expression.

Han Li calmly said, “It seems this is one of the places with a sign placed here. If I remember correctly, there should be two marked locations that lead to the Spirit Kindle Fruit. This is a prime opportunity to track them down.” Then with a fling of his sleeve, a ball of white light flew from his sleeve and landed ten meters away from them to reveal the Wind Riding Chariot.

With a firm tone, Han Li ordered, “ We’ll quickly chase after them! You fly far too slowly so climb into the chariot. We’ll only be able to catch up to them if we fly several times faster than we do now.”

“Several times faster? There are too many spatial tears in the valley. Isn’t it too dangerous?” Violet Spirit’s expression changed in alarm.

Chapter 831: Transforming the Mountain

"I am only doing this because I am certain it will work," Han Li mysteriously smiled and continued, "Could it be that Lady Violet Spirit doesn't want to take any risks for the Spirit Kindle Fruit?"

Violet Spirit's clear eyes flickered for a moment before she sweetly smiled and said,

"According to what I know of you, Brother Han definitely wouldn't take any risks unless he were absolutely certain. It seems you have a secret technique that allows you to see through the invisible spatial tears. As such, I will respectfully follow your suggestion." Then with a blur, she boarded the Wind Riding Chariot.

Han Li glanced at the woman with a trace of surprise but wordlessly commanded the chariot forward regardless. In the blink of an eye, the chariot tore through the air in a streak of white light and flew through the passage.

According to Han Li's predictions, it would take less than half a day of travelling across this wasteland before they caught up to the party of Ghost Spirit Sect disciples. When Han Li and Violet Spirit finally caught up to them, they saw that Elder Zhong's party was encountering some mishaps. Due to a mistake of a Ghost Spirit Sect disciple, a nearby ancient restriction had been activated and they were currently occupied with trying to save themselves.

With Han Li's spiritual sense and caution, Elder Zhong wasn't able to discover any trace of them. Rather, Han Li was able to use his powerful spiritual sense to observe them from a distance without detection.

Han Li clearly felt that the spiritual Qi fluctuations of the ancient restriction weren't very strong. With their mid Nascent Soul-stage Elder Zhong, the Ghost Spirit Sect cultivators wouldn't be trapped for long.

However, this small period of delay was a golden opportunity for Han Li to gain distance on them.

Han Li urged the Wind Riding Chariot forward and steeled his heart, veering off the original route. Not long after, he avoided several spatial tears on the way and left the Ghost Spirit Sect cultivators far behind. With Violet Spirit by his side, the two arrived at a sparkling emerald green mountain range. Han Li's mind stirred when he saw it and he ordered the Wind Riding Chariot to slowly come to a stop.

"It should be here. Do you see the mountain that resembles a flying bird? That's the sign." Violet Spirit spoke with a tone of excitement upon seeing the mountains. At that same moment, she couldn't help but look in Han Li's direction.

In truth, although Violet Spirit said she held complete confidence in Han Li, she still felt a lump in her throat when the Wind Riding Chariot traveled at lightning speed. It came as a surprise to her that Han Li's route was completely safe. They had avoided any spatial tears or ancient restrictions that may have laid along the way.

Completely unbeknownst to her, Han Li also felt quite lucky. While he was able to see through spatial tears with his Brightsight Spirit Eyes, it was quite lucky that they hadn't activated any ancient restrictions on their way.

With that thought, Han Li narrowed his eyes as he stared at a peculiar mountain in the distance.

The direction that the bird beak pointed should be the location of the final mark leading to the Spirit Kindle Fruit.

While Violet Spirit waited, she saw that Han Li was mulling over his thoughts. She hesitantly proposed, "Brother Han, will we not set out now? How about we destroy the mountain before we go?"

"According to the jade slip, the location of the final mark should

be in a desert around five hundred kilometers away from the mountain. Is that right?"

"That's right. What does Brother Han mean?"

Han Li calmly said, "It's quite simple. Even if we destroy the mountain, they will still be able to see the damage was recent and know it was where the sign was located. And since the last location is the neighboring desert, it will only be a matter of time before they find it. The only method to buy us more time would be to place down an illusion formation covering the mountain to make it appear completely ordinary. In this way, they will miss the sign."

"Brother Han's words are quite reasonable. But it will be a problem setting up an illusion formation large enough to cover the entire mountain and powerful enough to escape the spiritual sense of a Nascent Soul cultivator. Could it be that Brother Han is an expert in illusion techniques as well?" Violet Spirit asked him with a tone of bewilderment.

Han Li chuckled and said, "I'm not skilled in illusion techniques, but I have someone that is."

Then with a casual wave, a streak of white light shot out from his sleeve. In a brilliant flash, a gorgeous white-clothed woman appeared.

"Greetings Master!" Silvermoon curtsied to Han Li as soon as she appeared.

"Who is she?" Violet Spirit couldn't help but cry out in alarm upon seeing Silvermoon appear.

"This is Silvermoon. Consider her a subordinate of me," Han Li gave a vague answer before pointing to the mountain. "Silvermoon, do you have a method of placing an illusion formation around the mountain in a short amount of time?"

Silvermoon respectfully replied, "With Master's illusion formation tools and my illusion techniques, it should be possible.

However, my illusions aren't powerful enough to reliably escape the notice of a Nascent Soul cultivator's spiritual sense. Also, my illusion techniques won't last as long as a spell formation. It will only last two days before fading away."

After some consideration, Han Li slapped his storage pouch and took out two glowing sets of spell formation tools. He handed them over to Silvermoon and said, "That's fine. Start setting it up. It will be fine however strong it may be. Two days will also be enough."

"Yes, Master!" Silvermoon took the spell formations tools and began her work.

At that moment, Han Li was looking at the bird-shaped mountain and a cold glint appeared in his eyes. He rolled his hands and then raised one, releasing an azure swordstreak that was over thirty meters long. It assumed the shape of a flood dragon and coiled once around the mountain before shooting back to his body with a roar.

The bird-shaped mountain suddenly became to crumble. The bird head and the wings instantly collapsed to rubble, carving out an ordinary shape from the mountain.

Violet Spirit stared at the mountain, dumbfounded. Although she knew that her abilities couldn't hope to compare to Han Li's, it was quite alarming that he was able to exert such amazing might without even summoning a magic treasure.

Although she had already heard that Han Li was a force only inferior to the Three Great Heavenly South cultivators, Violet Spirit had always felt somewhat skeptical of the rumors. After all, only until recently Han Li was a Core Formation cultivator such as herself. To garner such widespread fame shortly after entering the Nascent Soul stage was outlandish to Violet Spirit. She had originally believed that his reputation was a result of luck and his opportunistic methods.

As Violet Spirit was awed by his display of might, Silvermoon

had already flown to the cut mountain and began to place down the spell formation tools.

Silvermoon acted quickly and in the time it took to finish a meal, she was already done. Layers of white mist began to slowly rise from the mountain, covering a majority of it. Only the peak of the mountain was left uncovered.

With this done, Silvermoon streaked towards the mountaintop in a ball of silver light and opened her mouth, spitting out a pink mist to cover the mountain below.

As Silvermoon continued to envelop the mountain in mist, the mist quickly faded away as soon as it left her mouth. Not long after, an astonishing scene occurred.

The mountain's surroundings distorted, causing it to completely disappear with a verdant forest in its place.

Han Li nodded with satisfaction.

...

In an underground hall thousands of kilometers away, Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying were sitting cross-legged at separate corners of the hall. They were commanding their magic treasures to continuously strike at the brilliantly shining magic treasure despite the treasure's dimming light.

The Buddhist characters floating on the barrier were originally the size of a grain, but now they had grown to the size of a fist. They wandered across the barrier's surface in a solemn display.

Outside the golden barrier, a white wind dragon, a golden streak, two blue water pythons, and a dark green ring were continuously striking at the surface of the light barrier. Each strike caused the light barrier to faintly tremble in flashes of light.

By this time, Marquis Nanlong's and Lu Weiying's faces appeared completely pale.

This was to be expected. They were unceasingly consuming their magic power without interruption and had overdrafted their vitality to continue attacking with their magic treasures. They were already cursing at the formidable durability of the Sanctuary Guardian Formation. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that they would have to risk their lives in order to break through this Buddhist spell formation.

Although the two had suffered great damage to their vitality, the barrier was also about to reach its limit. As such, the two gritted their teeth and continued to persevere as they cursed in their hearts.

After an unknown amount of time, a huge explosion sounded out. Immediately after, Lu Weiying stood up and shouted with delight, "It's broken! Broken! Finally, our effort has borne fruit!"

The golden barrier covering the table along with the talisman characters that floated around it instantly disappeared.

When Marquis Nanlong saw this, he rejoiced with excitement as well. Soon after, the two took a thorough look at the treasures and medicines that had laid behind the barrier.

As the two were particularly cunning individuals, neither of them immediately took action as their heartbeats suddenly sped up.

Chapter 832: Stirring Devils

Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying stared at the table and their gazes unconsciously met. They both watched each other with vigilance. Although the two had been friends for years, in the face of such precious treasures their friendship evaporated in an instant.

Silence filled the hall, only to be interrupted by Lu Weiying's chuckle. He said, "Brother Nanlong, we both are well aware of what the other is thinking. Although my cultivation was lower than yours in the past, you had suffered quite a bit of damage to your cultivation during your excursion in the Moulan Plains and now our strengths can be said to be equal. With so many spiritual medicines, we don't need to fight over them. It would be best to split them evenly rather than to have this end in mutual destruction."

Marquis Nanlong glanced at the most eye-catching treasure on the table and said, "I also agree with what Brother Lu is saying. Although we will divide the spiritual medicines evenly, I only want the alms bowl. You can have the other treasures. How about it?"

Lu Weiying's expression stirred, but after a moment of thought, he said, "The alms bowl? That's fine. Let's divide it like that then. As of current, I only wish to increase my lifespan and cultivation. I don't particularly value treasures."

Marquis Nanlong rejoiced. He originally thought he would have to sacrifice more to persuade Lu Weiying, but he had easily agreed to his conditions. Regardless, he erred on the side of caution and took a careful glance at Lu Weiying. Even after seeing that his expression was entirely calm, Marquis Nanlong still hesitated.

Upon seeing this, Lu Weiying smiled and said, "What? Did Brother Nanlong change his mind? Will I be taking the alms bowl instead?"

Marquis Nanlong's gaze flickered and he remained silent for a spell.

Eventually, Marquis Nanlong chuckled with a calm smile and replied, "Brother Lu must be joking. Since you've agreed, I will take you up on your offer. Let us take them at the same time. You take the three treasures and the jade talismans while I take the alms bowl. Then we will distribute the spirit medicines. Will that do?"

"Yes. Let's do as you say!" Lu Weiying agreed without any hesitation.

Satisfied, Marquis Nanlong nodded and the two took action at the same time.

Lu Weiying swept his sleeve towards the table and shot out a white mist to sweep up the three magic tools and the many jade talismans. Simultaneously, Marquis Nanlong carefully opened his mouth to sweep up the alms bowl in a ball of golden light.

This all happened smoothly without a problem. The treasures were swept up by the lights without any resistance and flew back to their respective owners.

When Marquis Nanlong took the alms bowl into his hand, he couldn't help but reveal an expression of joy. As for Lu Weiying, he didn't express the slight emotion upon acquiring his treasures.

As Marquis Nanlong looked at the flawless alms bowl in his hand, his smile faded away. With a quick flip of his hand, he slapped the alms bowl in a blur, placing a yellow talisman on top of it.

Lu Weiying's expression vastly changed at the sight of this. In his alarm, he asked, "Marquis Nanlong, what are you doing?"

"What am I doing? You think I didn't see that the treasures and jade talismans were being used to suppress this alms bowl? Although I don't know what it is, I know that it is a supreme ancient treasure. Whatever it is that lies within should also be

quite fearsome. However, if you think that I'll be opening this alms bowl in front of you, I fear you will be disappointed. Unless I am completely certain of suppressing it, I will not be opening it." As Marquis Nanlong spoke, his hand continued to slap down on the alms bowl, placing five various-colored talismans down in a single breath.

Lu Weiying soon regained his composure and said, "Hehe! I didn't think that you'd misunderstand my concession to your terms. I don't know why, but I feel we should immediately depart as soon as the medicines are divided. I don't want to stay here any longer than necessary."

Marquis Nanlong snorted in derision and said, "Then let's do as you say. We'll evenly split the medicines which will extend our lifespans. As for the remaining medicines, we'll pick them one by one." With one hand holding the alms bowl, he reached out towards the table with his other. In that instant, a foot-large hand of golden light appeared on the table and grabbed at the Heaven Essence Fruit.

Lu Weiying's expression turned sullen. Without giving a reply, a hand of white light appeared above the table and grabbed at the purple Heavenmend Mushroom on the side.

With a muffled sound, both the Heaven Essence Fruits and the Heavenmend Mushroom disappeared from the table and the two hands of light grabbed nothing. Then the table brilliantly shined with light and all the spirit medicines bubbled away without a trace.

Interrupted by this, Marquis Nanlong and Lu Weiying were dumbstruck.

At that moment, the alms bowl that Marquis Nanlong held in his hand began to wildly flash with light and the talismans sealing it began to combust. The talismans were instantly turned to ashes by pitch-black demonic flames.

The flames spread across the spirit medicines like wildfire. In Marquis Nanlong's furious alarm, he looked down at the alms bowl in his hand and his face turned deathly pale. Without another thought, golden light shined from his hand and a worn golden talisman appeared on his finger as he fiercely slapped it onto the alms bowl.

But it was clear to see that it was too late. The lid of the alms bowl shot up into the air with an explosive bang and an indistinct black light was quickly released from it, shooting towards the holder of the alms bowl — Marquis Nanlong.

At such a close distance, he wasn't able to avoid it. With his other hand still several inches away from placing the golden talisman on the alms bowl, the black light sunk into his face and disappeared without a trace.

“AH!” A miserable and pained scream left Marquis Nanlong’s mouth and he fiercely smashed the alms bowl into the wall beside him before kneeling onto the floor with his hands covering his head. As for the golden talisman, it had already dropped to the floor. Soon, his face began to warp.

‘Possession?’ When Lu Weiying saw this, his face turned pale from fright. Without another thought, he pointed to Marquis Nanlong and two blue halberds shot out from his body to fiercely strike at Marquis Nanlong without mercy.

But in the following moment, Marquis Nanlong roared and raised his head to reveal a face covered in a dense layer of black Qi. His eyes had become silver-white and they glared at the incoming blue halberds without emotion.

Just as the blue halberds arrived before him, Marquis Nanlong suddenly raised his arm. Clang. Clang. The two halberds were quickly blocked by his arm, the sound of metal striking metal resonating from the impact. The blow had scattered the robes to reveal his bare skin underneath.

When Lu Weiying saw this, his eyes were wide with shock.

The arm was glowing with black light and covered in purple-red tendons and his hand became entirely hard and was tangled with black Qi. This grotesque, monstrous arm was currently blocking the two blue halberds without the slightest injury.

‘Inconceivable.’ Lu Weiying’s heart dropped. Despite Marquis Nanlong’s mid Nascent Soul-stage spiritual sense, he had been possessed in an instant, causing his body to undergo a complete transformation. ‘That black light was no ordinary evil soul.’

With that thought, Lu Weiying suddenly flung his sleeve and summoned a white spell flag into his hand and a fire-red scarf into the other. He tossed out the scarf as soon as it appeared, forming a red barrier of light in front of him, alleviating some of the panic that filled his mind.

To the best of his understanding, his Vast Yang Scarf should be enough to block any devilish or demonic attacks, given that he was facing an evil soul.

Marquis Nanlong’s body stood up with a stagger but didn’t immediately attack Lu Weiying. Instead, it held out its arms in front of it and carefully examined its body once through. Then with its head facing the sky, it monstrously howled in laughter, “Haha! Keke... After so many years, I’ve finally been freed. Let’s see who will block the rise of the Sacred Ancestors now? This world now belongs to our Holy Realm.”

‘Sacred Ancestor? Holy Realm?’ Despite not know what this meant, Lu Weiying felt a chill overwhelm his heart when he heard it. He silently turned to look at the hall’s entrance and recalled the spell formation he had placed outside the hall.

Suddenly, his body brilliantly shined with white light and shot towards the hall’s entrance. In that short time, he arrived at the hall’s entrance. But as soon as he rejoiced, a silhouette blurred in front of him, a huge bang appearing in its wake.

Lu Weiying felt a blow of huge strength resonate through his Vast Yang Scarf and blow him back deep into the hall. Like a rag, he crashed flat against the wall and sank a meter deep into it.

Although a barrier of light protected him, he felt a thunderous tremble shake through his back and his body became completely numb. For the time being, he had lost control of his body.

At that moment, Lu Weiying clearly saw Marquis Nanlong's body standing at the hall's entrance. It coldly lowered its fist and smirked at him, causing his complexion to blanch.

Chapter 833: Consuming Souls

"Not bad, not bad! Despite the fact that this devilified body is inferior to my original body, you must be quite the cultivator to withstand that blow. I will accept you as a blood sacrifice!" A sinister voice left the mouth of Marquis Nanlong's body.

The black Qi surrounding his face grew even more concentrated and his pair of silver-white eyes icily stared at Lu Weiying as if he were already dead. Lu Weiying felt an icy tremble fill his heart.

Once those words were said, Marquis Nanlong's body blurred and pounced towards Lu Weiying, leaving a trail of afterimages in its wake.

Lu Weiying felt himself overcome with fear. He thought to emerge from the wall, but he didn't have nearly enough time as Marquis Nanlong was far too quick. In a display of monstrous strength, black Qi-clad claws were stabbing towards Lu Weiying's skull.

In his panic, Lu Weiying resolved himself and white light flashed from his body, pouring the entirety of his magic power into his fire-red scarf. In that instant, the barrier of fire-red light sharply expanded to six inches thick, right before 'Marquis Nanlong' fiercely stabbed his claws into him with emotionless eyes.

A bizarre crackle sounded out and blinding light flashed before Lu Weiying. He watched in fear as the monstrous claw pierced through the barrier before eventually coming to a stop. Lu Weiying was greatly relieved to see this and regained a bit of his composure. Then, light began to flash once more around his body as he attempted to break free of the metal-like walls.

When 'Marquis Nanlong' saw this, a smirk appeared on his face. With another loud bang, he smashed his other hand into the red light barrier.

In that moment, most of the spirit light that Lu Weiying had emitted from his body suddenly dispersed for some unknown reason. Before Lu Weiying even realized what had happened, ‘Marquis Nanlong’ pulled on his arm stuck in the barrier and smashed his free hand into the light barrier.

The light barrier trembled and blew away the remaining spirit light that Lu Weiying had summoned, scattering it away entirely. At that moment, his body sank several inches deeper into the wall.

‘Not good!’ Lu Weiying suddenly realized what was happening and his expression vastly changed. He hastily shook the white spell flag in his hand in an attempt to activate it.

However, ‘Marquis Nanlong’ began to methodically pound down his fist, refusing to give Lu Weiying the opportunity to activate the flag. Each punch struck down just as he began to pour spiritual Qi into the flag and forcefully interrupted him, with each continuous strike coming down faster and with increasing force. Trembles resonated throughout the wall.

Lu Weiying thought to execute a secret technique, but half of his magic power faded away when he attempted to activate it.

As a result, Lu Weiying was denied the use of his abilities as he was helplessly trapped inside the stone wall. He could only blankly watch in despair as the red light barrier around him gradually became dimmer.

Lu Weiying met eyes with ‘Marquis Nanlong’ and he felt his heart violently tremble. It was only a matter of time before his treasure was broken through and his body smashed to a pulp.

With that thought, Lu Weiying gritted his teeth and loudly shouted. White light shined from his head as a Nascent Soul with his face emerged from it. Its face was panicked and it was tightly holding onto a small blue sword.

At the same time, the Vast Yang Scarf suddenly ruptured. The

last trace of hesitation faded from the Nascent Soul's mind and it suddenly disappeared with a stamp of its foot, blurring towards the hall's entrance.

However, things didn't go as planned.

With his back still facing the entrance as if oblivious to what was happening, Marquis Nanlong's back suddenly exploded and a ghost face with its eyes shut sprouted out from it, identical to the one on the Blood Curse Gate.

At that moment, the ghost face opened its silver eyes and released a purple streak from its mouth.

At that same moment, Lu Weiying's Nascent Soul had already tossed out his flying sword and was riding away on it as quickly as he could. But when it heard a howl across its ear, the Nascent Soul felt its mind burn as something spurted forth from its head.

The Nascent Soul blankly stared at the long strip that emerged from its brow and sharply screamed. Then an instant later, it lost all the strength in its body and it fell onto the ground, motionless.

Were there anyone present to see this, they would've seen a long purple strip shot out from the ghost face's mouth and pierce through the Nascent Soul's head, the purple strip being the ghost face's tongue.

When the ghost face saw the Nascent Soul fell, it sneered and withdrew its tongue, drawing Lu Weiying's Nascent Soul into its mouth and chewing it several times before swallowing. It then slowly closed its eyes with a satisfied expression.

At that moment, 'Marquis Nanlong' finally turned around and expressionlessly looked at the masterless small blue sword. A harsh expression appeared on its face and it swiped its hand, tearing out the heart from Lu Weiying's body and crushing it, scattering it into the air as a bloody mist. The body was now completely lifeless.

With this done, 'Marquis Nanlong' expressionlessly swept his

gaze around and then effortlessly turned into a black mist before heading outside. A moment later, he found himself facing several masterless spell formations. He scoffed and passed through them before directly rushing out of the pool.

In the time it took to finish a cup of tea, ‘Marquis Nanlong’ appeared several hundred meters above a mountain and glanced around. Flying at such a height naturally stirred a few of the restrictions in Devilfall Valley. Countless bolts of lightning rained down upon him from the sky. But whenever they arrived three meters away from him, they were redirected and turned away, leaving him entirely safe and peaceful.

‘Marquis Nanlong’ look around him for half a day and eventually got his bearings. Suddenly, he narrowed his eyes, silver light flickering from within them, and he streaked through the sky in a streak of black light.

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At that moment, the Ghost Spirit Sect Master’s party was standing at the side of the giant altar and were looking at the endless stairs that rose above them with expressions of awe.

Earlier, they had been caught in a large scale restriction over five kilometers away from the altar and were delayed for nearly a day as a result.

Now that they had finally arrived next to the altar, they were able to see that although it was grand and imposing, there were clear signs of the vast passage of time. Not only were the stairs overgrown with weeds, but there were also a few areas that were completely worn down.

Wang Tiansheng examined the altar for a long while. He eventually said, “Go! When we arrive at the top portion of the altar, we’ll be able to find traces of the Spirit Ether Garden. According to the soul remnant, the entrance should be there.” He then stepped forward and took the lead climbing up the altar.

But much to the shock of the others, Wang Tiansheng loudly cursed as soon as he set off. Yellow light then appeared all around him. Looking up at the seemingly endless flight of stairs, he resentfully gritted his teeth and said, “Everyone be careful! Restrictions exist on these steps. Climbing to the top of the altar won’t be an easy task.”

Wei Wuya frowned when he heard this. Although he didn’t care about a few restrictions, it would definitely slow down the rest of the party. He was helpless to do anything about this.

The others also shared his thoughts. Knowing that the Spirit Ether Garden lay in front of them, the existence of these restrictions aroused irritation and impatience in them.

“Let’s go!” Wang Tiangu sighed and set foot on the stairs. Yellow light then lit up around him and he felt his body become half a ton heavier.

At that moment, the others were affected by the formation as well. While Wei Wuya was able to move unimpeded, the three Core Formation cultivators paled as they struggled to climb.

The party of cultivators slowly climbed to the top of the altar.

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Next to an oasis concealed by restrictions, Han Li looked at the water in front of him and muttered, “This is the Spirit Kindle Fruit?” Outside of the restrictions, there was boundless yellow sand surrounding them.

“That’s right. This is definitely the fruit. Regardless of its exterior appearance, all the signs point to it being genuine!” Violet Spirit stood three meters away from Han Li and spoke with an expression of excitement. Her luminous eyes were unerringly focused on the oasis.

At the center of the water in front of them, there was some sludge emerging from the water along with the stalk of a glistening

emerald-green plant. It was a meter tall and covered in thumb-sized oval leaves. Growing at the very top of the plant were four odd fruits. They were fire-red, slender at the top and wide at the bottom, and glowed with a faint red light at the top. Along with the faint scent that it emitted, it bore a striking resemblance to a lit candle on a stand.

Han Li was also certain that this was the Spirit Kindle Fruit and smiled when he heard that Violet Spirit thought so as well.

Violet Spirit deeply sighed and turned to Han Li, saying with a decisive tone, “I’m going to pick the fruits right now. It’s best not to let matters drag on.”

Chapter 834: An Odd Beast

“There is no need to be so impatient. Since the plant has existed here for so many years, it is possible that there is something guarding it, or it would’ve already been consumed. Even with the illusion formation protecting it.” Despite his excitement, Han Li maintained a calm exterior as he spoke.

“Brother Han means to say that there could be an ancient beast guarding it?” Alarmed, Violet Spirit regained clarity of mind. Han Li had previously mentioned a bit about the ancient beasts found in the valley.

“That’s right. Do you see the two snapped branches at the top of the tree? Two of the fruits should’ve already been consumed by the ancient beast guarding it. Although it will not raise one’s cultivation realm when unrefined, it will still have some effect on breaking through a bottleneck. That should be why the fruits still haven’t been entirely consumed.”

There was no doubt that if the creature was nearby, it would be hidden in the lake.

Ever since Han Li had entered the valley depths with Violet Spirit, he had taken the cloak off of his head. He figured she would’ve already guessed that he possessed the ability to avoid spatial tears after he drove the Wind Riding Chariot, so he hadn’t bothered to hide it.

Having discovered nothing after sweeping his spiritual sense across the lake, he looked at it with glowing blue eyes; his gaze penetrated a hundred meters into the depths of the pond and his expression stirred.

Staring at Han Li’s face, Violet Spirit noticed his change of expression and frowned, asking, “What? Has Brother Han discovered something?”

With a calm expression, he turned his head to Violet Spirit and said, “Step back. The ancient beast guarding the fruit seems to be troublesome. It will take a bit of effort before I can dispose of it.” The fact that the beast was able to evade the notice of his spiritual sense left a deep impression on Han Li.

“Then I must thank Brother Han for his trouble!” Knowing that her own abilities were lacking, she could only rely on Han Li and tactfully obeyed. She then flew back a hundred meters and motionlessly floated in the air.

Once Han Li saw Violet Spirit step aside, he reached to his waist and tossed three spirit beast pouches in the air. Then with an incantation gesture, he summoned tens of thousands of Gold Devouring Beetles to fill the sky around him and blot out the sun. Golden light flashed across a hundred meters in the sky.

“Ah!” When Violet Spirit saw this, she couldn’t help but yelp in shock.

She knew of Han Li’s insects and even witnessed him using them in Heavenvoid Hall and in his battle against the disciple of Archsaint Six Paths. However, the Gold Devouring Beetles as of current had undergone a massive change in color, viciousness, and numbers.

The sudden appearance of these tens of thousands of immensely intimidating insects released an unordinary pressure that left her in awe.

Han Li paid no attention to Violet Spirit’s shock and arranged the Gold Devouring Beetles in formation. Then with a wave of his sleeve, thirty-six of his Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords successively flew out and began to flutter around the cloud of beetles in foot-long streaks of light.

He struck all of the golden swordlights with successive spell seals and they immediately split into over a hundred identical images, each radiating with brilliant light. He pointed at the swordlights in

the sky and softly shouted, “Go!”

The swordlights trembled once and each began to mysteriously disappear one by one. In the blink of an eye, the Aureate Sword Formation had been placed down below the cloud of beetles.

Han Li pursed his lips. With the formation down, he felt much more at ease. He looked into the lake down below as a harsh expression appeared on his face. With a flick of his hands, golden light brightly shined and thunder roared around them, summoning a fist-sized ball of lightning between his hands.

In the blink of an eye, the ball of lightning grew to the size of a bowl and Han Li pushed his hands forward, launching the golden ball towards the lake with a clap of thunder.

When the ball of lightning touched the lake’s surface, thunder roared as the ball ruptured, filling the lake with arcs of lightning.

Violet Spirit bit her lips as she saw this, her heart heavy and her gaze focused on the scene.

The golden lightning didn’t disappear; instead, it violently surged through the water, causing a ten-meter-wide whirlpool to appear at the center of the lake. A muffled roar sounded out and a black-white mist of demonic Qi emerged from the whirlpool, faintly concealing a strange ancient beast.

The beast appeared peculiar. It had a soft, jet-black body that was over twenty meters long and filled with bumps and holes of varying size. At the center of the mass of flesh, there was a huge protrusion that appeared to be its head. And apart from its single jet-black eye, Han Li saw no other sensory organs, not even a mouth or nose. The beast was truly disgusting to behold, causing even Han Li to feel apprehensive. When Violet Spirit saw this beast from a distance, her complexion paled and she felt a chill run down her spine.

However, Han Li had never heard or read of an ancient beast like

this one. He couldn't help but glance at Violet Spirit, but she simply responded with a bitter smile; it was clear she didn't know either.

Facing something that he didn't recognize, Han Li decided it would be best to deal with it as quickly as possible rather than to slowly probe it and allow it to unleash its attacks. He promptly waved his hand and struck the insect swarm above with a spell seal.

Suddenly, the buzzing of the insect swarm filled the air and they quickly condensed at their center, forming a huge golden cloud that moved to cover the ancient beast.

When the ancient beast saw this, it knew that things were far from good. Its body expanded and deflated, releasing a strange green liquid from the holes on its body towards the golden cloud and filling the air with a fishy scent.

Han Li frowned, but his brow soon relaxed. The green liquid didn't have any effect on the Gold Devouring Beetles and didn't harm them in the slightest. The cloud of beetles moved down to envelop the beast, but the black-white Qi that surrounded its body obstructed the beetles from moving any closer to it. However, it wouldn't last long.

The beast's mind trembled with fear. The countless beetles were doing their utmost to devour the black-white Qi that took it countless years to cultivate. It tried to flee by submerging itself in the water but Han Li was already prepared for this. He pointed to the water and summoned a walnut-sized blue fireball at his fingertip, then launched it with a flick.

Crackle. The fireball ruptured in a display of blinding blue light. A cloud of icy blue Qi quickly spread from the explosion, covering the lake in a thick layer of ice as it spread. In the blink of an eye, the blue lake turned into a huge block of ice.

The ancient beast's plan to escape into the water came to a halt.

Instead, it bounced off of the ice and became filled with even greater terror. It then attempted to fly away with the golden beetles surrounding the black-white Qi that covered it.

Just as it traveled to the lakeside in a blur, a flicker of golden light suddenly appeared in an empty space. A fine golden thread had flashed towards the ancient beast.

A small chunk of jet-black flesh was then ripped off, sprinkling the beetle cloud with blood.

The golden thread had instantly cut through the black-white mist that protected the beast and cut off a small portion of its body. With the gap in its defenses, countless golden beetles swarmed through the opening and covered the ancient beast's body.

The beast suddenly released a miserable shriek and its body flickered with light. A layer of demonic green flame covered it to try and burn the Gold Devouring Beetles that surrounded it.

Although the green flames were a formidable ability that the beast had bitterly cultivated for years, it didn't hinder the Gold Devouring Beetles in the slightest. In fact, it provoked them and they began to devour the beast with even greater speed. The beast experienced indescribable pain all over its body and it changed direction in a desperate attempt to flee from the other side of the lake.

Han Li stood at the lakeside with both of his hands behind his back. He coldly stared at the beetle-shrouded beast as it floundered about like a headless fly. Unfortunately for it, he had already placed down the Aureate Sword Formation. Although he didn't activate the formation to close in on the beast, a golden sword thread would cleave off a portion of its body whenever it tried to run.

Soon, over half of the beast's body had disappeared and its screams began to lose strength. It eventually released one last

pained scream before dropping onto the ice and remaining completely motionless.

This nameless beast's true ability was its amazing aura concealment; even late Nascent Soul cultivators wouldn't be able to discover a trace of it, but its abilities in battle were pathetically mediocre.

It was a pity that its disguise had been seen through by Han Li's Brightsight Spirit Eyes. With the beast trapped by the Aureate Sword Formation and swarmed by the Gold Devouring Beetles, it wasn't able to employ its innate escaping abilities and was easily slain.

A short moment later, the Gold Devouring Beetles buzzed as they flew into the air, leaving behind only a strange black-white sphere, the beast's demon core.

At that moment, Violet Spirit flew over and glanced at Han Li with admiration. "Brother Han, your current abilities are truly profound. You were able to kill this ancient beast with complete ease. It seems the rumors of Brother Han being on par with the Three Great Heavenly South Cultivators are true."

"It isn't that my abilities are outstanding, but the beast was weak. It couldn't compare to the ancient beasts that I previously fought." Han Li shook his head and then reached out, summoning the demon core into his hand.

Han Li looked down at it and saw the sparkling black-white demon core. This was the first time he had seen a demon core with such colors and couldn't help but appear excited.

Chapter 835: Acquiring Fruit

With a more pressing matter at hand, Han Li knew it wasn't the time to research the demon core and put it away with a flip of his hand.

Then he tossed out three of his empty spirit pouches into the air and pointed to the Gold Devouring Beetles. They screeched and immediately split into three different clouds as they returned to the spirit beast pouches.

With the beetles returned, Han Li mentally commanded the thirty-six Bamboo Cloudswarm Swords back into his sleeve, dissolving the Aureate Sword Formation surrounding the lake.

"Let's go pick the fruit and be quick about it. I don't know how long the illusion formation will delay the Ghost Spirit Sect cultivators." Han Li then flew across the lake in an azure streak.

When Violet Spirit saw this, she closely followed after him and the two arrived six meters above the plant.

After sweeping his gaze across the plant, Han Li turned his head to Violet Spirit and said, "You go ahead and pick them first but be careful! These spirit fruits are rather peculiar. You will need to contain them in wood-attribute materials, or their medicinal power won't last over the next few days."

"Many thanks for your warning, Brother Han. I will be careful." Violet Spirit forcefully suppressed her excitement and smiled to Han Li. Then without a trace of hesitation, she waved her sleeve and summoned a dark-green box into her hand. Then with a flick of her hand, a white streak flashed by and a fruit disappeared without a trace.

With the wooden box already prepared and in the woman's hand, the white streak flew into the box, carrying a Spirit Kindle Fruit inside of it. She closed the lid of the box and let out a long sigh,

then placed it in her storage pouch.

“What? Will Violet Spirit not take another?” When Han Li saw that she only took one, he was stunned.

Violet Spirit answered with a sweet smile, “Many thanks for Brother Han’s kindness, but one will be enough. Apart from the information I acquired, I did little else to find this place. It was all due to Brother Han’s abilities that I was able to acquire this fruit. Although I do have something of a friendship with you, I still can’t have an equal share of the fruit with you. Brother Han should take the remaining ones. After all, in addition to being refined into Nature Origin Pills, these fruits can be used to increase your cultivation.”

Han Li was quite surprised to hear her say such deferential words.

To tell the truth, although she was famed for her beauty in the Scattered Star Seas and was the most beautiful woman he had seen, she was also quite shrewd. But after the Exquisite Sound Sect was seized from her, her temperament had taken a turn for the worse and Han Li had kept his distance as a result.

Now that she spoke with reason, regardless of whether her words were a result of sincerity or deliberate calculation, Han Li’s impression of her vastly improved. Restraining one’s greed when facing a worldly Spirit Fruit wasn’t an easy task.

“Since Violet Spirit has said this, I won’t be polite.” Han Li nodded and slapped his storage pouch. In a flash of white light, a wooden box he had prepared beforehand appeared in his hand. He flicked the box open with his free hand and an azure light glowed from it. The three Spirit Kindle Fruits trembled and fell off before being bound by the azure light and were drawn into the box.

With the box safely put away, Han Li said, “Let’s go! We can’t stay here for long. We don’t know how long until the Ghost Spirit Sect finds us. Although I have no fear of fighting them, the pills

must be refined quickly.”

Violet Spirit pursed her lips and said, “Of course. The fruits won’t hold for long. However, we cannot return the way we came or we will encounter them. Wouldn’t it be better to pick a direction and find a secret area a few thousand kilometers away to refine the pills? As for where, it will be up to Brother Han of course.”

“Where to go...” Han Li frowned and took a look around him.

Something suddenly came to mind and he slapped his storage pouch. A piece of worn and rough silk appeared in his hand, the map of Devilfall Valley that Han Li acquired from the azure silkworm robes.

He carefully looked at the map and took measure of his surroundings and position, revealing an expression of surprise. The position of this desert wasn’t too far away from an area that the map marked. They should be able to arrive in two day’s time.

After taking a look at the crude mark on the map, Han Li grew pensive.

Seeing that Han Li didn’t immediately reply to her and was instead looking at a tough piece of fabric, Violet Spirit couldn’t help but grow curious. But since she was clever, she decided to silently wait in place until Han Li came to a decision.

“Follow me. We will first refine the medicine pills before deciding anything else.” With that said, Han Li put the map away. He then glanced at the plant behind him and frowned. With a chop of his hand, a streak of azure light flashed out and severed one of its twigs, but as soon as the twig touched the ground, it instantly withered and turned to ash.

A trace of sadness appeared in Han Li’s eyes. It appeared that the records were true. The tree of the Spirit Kindle Fruit was different from other trees. It was one of the few spirit roots that were

incapable of being moved. Any attempt would result in the tree's immediate death.

Without any further hesitation, he raised his hand and released the Wind Riding Chariot in a streak of light. The two boarded the chariot and took off in a flash of light, streaking through the sky until it appeared only to be a white speck.

Before he took off, Han Li already made plans to first find somewhere to refine the Nature Origin Pill and quickly consume the pill's medicine power. With that done, he would then take a look at the map and look for the secret treasures.

Any treasures that the map revealed must be extraordinary given how mysterious the map was. So long as it wasn't too dangerous, Han Li would definitely pay a visit to the areas that the map marked.

About two hours later, the party of Ghost Spirit Sect cultivators arrived at the oasis. However, the lake had turned to ice and the plant that laid at the center of the lake was lacking any fruit. The Ghost Spirit Sect disciples glanced at each other in dismay when they saw this. Elder Zhong appeared particularly pale.

At that moment, Han Li had already traveled over five hundred kilometers towards the area marked on the map. Not long after, they left the desert and appeared in an area consisting of green-yellow plateaus of varying heights.

Han Li couldn't help but sigh in amazement when he saw the new scenery.

Devilfall Valley seemed to include different terrain for every corner of it. It appeared almost as if every terrain that existed was present in the valley.

After half a day, Han Li pressed the Wind Riding Chariot forward before eventually arriving at a mountainous area.

Seeing that these mountains weren't very tall, Han Li traveled a

hundred kilometers deep into the mountain range and eventually stopped above a small ordinary mountain.

Han Li floated at low altitude beside the mountain and said, "Fellow Daoist Violet Spirit, we've arrived. We will refine our pills separately. I've already swept my spiritual sense around here and there shouldn't be any ancient restrictions or spatial tears here."

Violet Spirit glanced around and immediately replied with a smile, "Many thanks, Brother Han. Then I will set off first." Then, she flew off to a nearby mountain and began to create her own hidden cave residence in preparation to refine her medicine pills.

When Han Li saw her disappear into her mountain, he blurred towards the Wind Riding Chariot. Standing ten meters away, he clasped his hands in an incantation gesture and waved it towards the chariot. Once it shrank and returned to his sleeve, he flew off to a small mountain in front of him.

Soon, Han Li had carved out a simple cave residence with tens of his flying swords. He arranged a small-scale spell formation outside of its entrance before walking into the cave residence. He even put eight Core Formation grade puppets to stand guard at the cave's entrance to ward against surprises.

Finished, Han Li finally felt at ease and entered a secluded room. He tossed his storage pouch in the air and pulled out the many materials he had prepared for the Nature Origin Pill with his spiritual sense, spilling them onto the floor in a white mist.

Soon after, Han Li summoned the wooden box that contained the Spirit Kindle Fruits along with a unique azure cauldron, both floating in front of him.

Han Li squinted as he stared at them and deeply sighed before sitting on the ground.

Although this would be the first time he would refine the Nature Origin Pill, he had received masterful attainments in pill

refinement techniques and he was already prepared for the task at hand. Additionally, Han Li had made particular preparations for his journey to Devilfall Valley. Not to mention his multiple Spirit Kindle Fruits, he also had plenty of extra supplementary materials for the Nature Origin Pill, allowing him to fail a couple of times without consequence.

As for whether or not Violet Spirit would be able to refine the Spirit Kindle Fruit into the Nature Origin Pill, Han Li wasn't entirely sure. She had never revealed her pill refinement techniques in front of him. However, since she only took one spirit fruit, she seemed confident in her success.

With that thought, Han Li focused his gaze on the small cauldron twirling in front of him.

He opened his mouth and blew out a stream of Nascent Flame. It coiled once around the cauldron before entering its center and igniting it with roiling flames.

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